THE DICKENSIAN

SUMMER NUMBER

VOL. XXXVIII 1st JUNE, 1942 No. 263

WHEN FOUND—

FOR the first time for thirty-seven years the list of Dickens Fellowship Branches was omitted from the inside back cover of this magazine for December last; and when it also failed to appear in the Spring number some of our readers nervously apprehended the fall of the Dickens Fellowship. Their fears were groundless; it happened that the first omission preceded by a very short time the extension of the war to the Western Hemisphere; it was merely a case of limited space due to paper shortage. The familiar feature is restored in this number and will appear in future once at least in each year. We are pleased to report that only a very few of our Branches are in a state of suspended animation; the majority are carrying on with much their usual vigour, and most of them are doing work of national interest as they did in the last war. So far as *The Dickensian* is concerned, we are gratified at the response to our appeals for more support, especially from overseas; and although recent extension of hostilities must naturally restrict American and Australasian branches to a certain extent, we are confident that the officials in charge of the destinies of those branches will, on mature consideration, decide that the cause of Freedom can best be served by keeping the D.F. flag flying; for never was there a greater need to read Dickens than there is to-day, as the President of the Brisbane Branch pointed out to his members a few months ago in the inspiring address printed on page 133.

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That persistent myth. The usually well-informed Mr. V. S. Pritchett is the latest convert to the theory that Cruikshank was *the* illustrator of Dickens (actually, as we know, he illustrated one novel, *Oliver Twist*, and book of *Sketches*). Lamenting in the "New Statesman," 28th February last the disappearance of illustrations from the English novel, as a loss to literary criticism, he quotes Cruikshank as an example, stating: 'he upsets all the weary pieties of realism which lie between us and a comprehension of Dickens, and half the silly criticisms of Dickens need never have been written if Cruikshank had been studied as closely as the text." Mr. Pritchett is, of course, right in his argument, but he should put the name of Phiz in front of Cruikshank, with Marcus Stone and Luke Fildes to follow it.

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Another Myth? We hear that there has been a divorce case in the Australian courts, where Charles Dickens was the plaintiff and Samuel Weller the co-respondent. It looks too good to be true! We await confirmatory particulars.

Blow 'em up enough! According to Old Weller, a sure way to success was to write a book about America "as 'll pay all expenses and more, if he blows 'em up enough." Some critics apply this method to Dickens. The latest is an American, Edmund Wilson, author of "The Wound and the Bow," just published. The publishers declined our request for a review copy, although according to reviews we have read, the greater part of the book is devoted to criticism of Dickens. But we cannot think we have lost much, as it appears that the author has profited by Tony Weller's advice. Mr. Robert Lynd, in the "News Chronicle," sums the book up very neatly. "I began to distrust his judgment when I found that he regards the invention of Silas Wegg as a blot on *Our Mutual Friend*"!

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Communal Feeding. The establishment of British Restaurants for adequate feeding at reasonable figures, recalls the existence of similar establishments in London, Manchester and Glasgow, in the early sixties of the last century. Dickens visited the one in London, the "Self-Supporting Cooking Depôt for the Working Classes," in Commercial Street, Whitechapel, which had accommodation for 300 persons at a time. In addition to light refreshments, served from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., tea, coffee, bread and butter, egg, ginger beer, all at one penny each, there was a "Public Dinner" every day from 12 to 3 o'clock, which provided, for the sum of 4½d., a bowl of soup, a plate of cold meat, a plate of potatoes, and plum-pudding or rice. The daily papers were also provided. Dickens visited this "depôt," and partook of the dinner. Writing in *All The Year Round*, 15th August, 1863, in an article *The Boiled Beef of New England*, he says he had seldom seen better waiting and certainly never ate better meat, potatoes and pudding. "I dined at my club in Pall Mall a few days afterwards," he adds, "for exactly twelve times the money, and not half as well." He satisfied himself that it was really self-supporting by examining the accounts for the previous two weeks (it had then been established a month). He found that the staff was properly paid, and, after charging each week with its full proportion of rent and all expenses, including interest on capital at 4 per cent. per annum, the profit in the last week had been, roughly, one pound ten, and the previous week, six pounds ten.

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Helping Hands. The Dickens Fellowship has once again to acknowledge the generous helping hand of its Vice-President, Count de Suzannet. He has sent the Editor a cheque for Fifty pounds, to help *The Dickensian* on its way in these trying times of paper restriction, and reduced circulation. We also gratefully acknowledge £6 12*s*. 0*d*. from the Boston Branch, £5 from the Vancouver Branch, £2 9*s*. 4*d*. from the Palos Verdes Branch, 12/- from the Pittsburgh Branch, and 10/- from Mr. F. W. Ashley. The Chicago Branch, in sending a guinea, were kind enough to write "we would all miss it sorely were the publication of *The Dickensian* to be suspended."

"The old, old fashion." Death has been particularly active lately in the ranks of Fellowship officials. We refer on other pages to the passing of Percy Carden, and of the President of the Vancouver Branch. Vancouver also mourns the great loss of a past President, Mrs. G. W. Edwards, who was well known to many on this side of the world. She was a delegate at the Edinburgh and Bath Conferences, which she attended with her sister, Miss Peggy Webling, to whom we offer our sincere condolences. Our sympathy also goes out to Mr. Kendal Pearson, for many years Hon. Secretary of the Gloucester Branch, on the loss of his wife after many happy years of work together for the Fellowship. Mr. Albert Popham, of the Southend Branch, has passed away at the age of 86, and the death is also recorded of Mr. Hubert Mayhew, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the same branch for many years. He was 63. To their wives we tender our deepest sympathy; they were all well known for their regular attendances at the Conferences, of which Mr. Popham was Chairman in 1925. These breaches in our ranks will be difficult indeed to fill.

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The Price. Although the price of a single number of *The Dickensian* is now increased to one shilling-and-sixpence the cost to members of the Dickens Fellowship will remain the same as before, viz., four shillings per annum post free. Subscription rate to non-members will be six shillings per annum post free. Unexpired portions of current subscriptions will not be affected. If any non-member should experience any difficulty in obtaining a copy regularly through his usual source of supply, we suggest an annual subscription of six shillings as the solution of his difficulties. This should be sent to Miss Minards at 23 St. Andrew's Road, Bedford.

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The Conference. This will be held at the Friends' Meeting House, Euston Road, London, on Saturday, July 18th, at 2.30 p.m. All members are invited to attend. The business meeting will be followed by a short tour through the squares of St. Marylebone. Present circumstances do not permit the usual luncheon. For other London Meetings please see page 183.

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The Fellowship in War time. In the next number I shall begin to record the many activities of the Fellowship during the past three years. Will Secretaries of home branches kindly send to me, before the beginning of July, brief details of their activities; these should comprise the general trend of winter and summer meetings, what special war work the Branch has been engaged on, and any other information likely to be of general interest. I look for their co-operation to make the account complete. Overseas branches will be represented in the Winter Number and should send details as quickly as possible. Please address all communications to me at 77 Lakenheath, London, N.14.

WALTER DEXTER.

DO YOU KNOW?

1. Who was called Lignum Vitæ ?
2. Who said " I'm a devil " ?
3. Where was Little Dorrit born ?
4. What is an alleytor ?
5. Where is Cloisterham ?
6. Who lived in Satis House ?
7. What caused the death of Krook ?
8. Who was the partner of Carboy ?
9. Where was Blandois imprisoned ?
10. Who went to the Salwanners ?
11. What was the alias of Montague Tigg ?
12. Where did Dr. Strong keep a school ?
13. What was the real name of Short ?
14. What was the business of Mr. Meagles ?
15. Who " punished the Amens tremendously " ?
16. Who called orange peel the poor surgeon's friend ?
17. Who subscribed himself " The Beggared Outcast " ?
18. What was the appropriate name of Gradgrind's residence ?
19. Who was the universal favourite who could make a boat out of anything from a skewer upwards ?
20. Who rubbed his hands slowly over each other, cracking the joints of his fingers and squeezing them into all possible distortions ?
21. Where did the Crummles company act ?
22. What was the name of Mrs. Wititterley's page ?
23. Who said " Lord, Keep my Memory Green " ?
24. What was the sign of Gabriel Varden's shop ?
25. Who was aunt and godmother to Esther Summerson ?
26. Who was always upright behind the proprieties ?
27. What was the name of Charity's sister ?
28. Who displayed " one vast, substantial smile " ?
29. What was the name of Oliver Twist's mother ?
30. Where did Mr. Winkle's father live ?
31. What was the Christian name of Mrs. Toots ?
32. Who suffered from the east wind ?
33. What was the name of the landlord of " The Dedlock Arms " ?
34. Where did Mr. Pickwick mistake his bedroom ?
35. Where did Pubsey & Co. do their business ?
36. Who was fuller of virtuous precepts than a copybook ?
37. What was the family name of Charles Darnay.
38. Who was the sulky fellow called " the Spider " ?
39. Whose " education had been conducted from his cradle on the strictest principle of the main chance " ?
40. What was the name of the nurse in the Pocket family ?
41. Whose husband broke his heart pumping water out of the Peruvian mines ?

Answers will be printed in the next number.

THE NEED TO READ DICKENS

By Dr. R. HAMLYN-HARRIS*

THE function of the Dickens Fellowship seems to me to be doubly important in such momentous days as these through which we are passing. Literature and literary art, at such a time, have a special claim upon our attention. The night is not over yet, and there is no sign of the glorious dawn which our dreams may envisage, and it might be reasonable to think that, during the throes of a great war such as this, literature and art could not possibly take their rightful place among the nations, or be suitably appreciated or even produced in any form. It would seem as if our ears were attuned only to the noise of battle; that beauty must of necessity fade before the grim realities of such strife. But it is not really so; for how else can we explain the fact that during such periods of stress there is a greater demand for decent literature than ever before. The trials of war have always strengthened character and purged away much dross, so that this becomes historical fact. War, which tries men's souls more than anything else, gives us a fierce longing to escape to a world, more real and more permanent, where the larger and deeper realities of life may mean so much more to us. Many need to find an outlet for their cravings and aspirations in books, and it seems to me that Dickensian literature in particular has now for us an interest and an attraction that it never possessed before; for the influence of the soul of man on Dickens exercised an influence on English literature which we might well recapture at this supreme moment of England's peril and greatness, and perhaps reap radiant possibilities in the infinite problems which confront the nation in the immediate future. Literature and democratic culture will release and recreate the spirit which tyrannical autocracy has sought to kill. The influence of Dickens in his day and generation on the people of England was profound and only greater than his influence on the literature of the period; just to select an instance., "Mary Barton" seems to convey the impression that Mrs. Gaskell came under the influence of Dickens. We know that Dickens did actually meet her and influence her mental outlook in a way peculiar to himself. Mrs. Gaskell gained her knowledge first hand and was thus able to describe what she had seen, even as Dickens was able to do. Mrs. Gaskell wrote of the poor and especially of the women of the poor, their sorrows and privations. She did not write with the same buoyancy as Dickens, nor with his sense of humour, but her work of delineating the character of Manchester people, their poverty and their loyalty to one another was sufficient to make her sympathies felt throughout England—which was the more remarkable because, at that time, it was not considered fashionable to write of the poor.

A study of Dickens means a spiritual uplift, an arming of the people for democracy. His numerous portrayals of the common man, his heart-searchings of the common soul, his revelations of the common heart, all constitute in no small measure a most powerful vision of

* Extracted from the Presidential Address delivered to the Brisbane Branch.

democracy. Dickens leads his people by actual escape into new realms of happy and joyous labour, thought and laughter, surely the sincerest expression of what we conceive to be the spirit of Democracy; and when we say that Democracy has failed, is it not because the true revelation of life has never entered into the souls of men? Dickens incites in the hearts of millions the mysterious unity of a collective vision, and gathers the scattered cries of humanity into one voice. Dickens's philosophy speaks as with the voice of a mighty wind, cleansing and purifying. We have in recent years seen an appalling instance of what can happen to a nation devoid of such spiritual aspirations and of the vastness of the decay which can set in when the intellectual atmosphere is befouled. Forty years ago Germany was respected almost universally; its literature was read and its art and science admired. To-day Germany is a social outcast, a pariah among the nations, because her moral decadence has eaten deep into the very marrow of her being. Her spiritual decay can be traced, among other things, to her modern literature, and I am tempted to quote Munsterburg, who says, "It seems as if all Germany had nothing else in mind but love making, love giving, and love abusing." Goethe, Schiller and Lessing are to-day unread by the youth of Germany. And so the German people, having become uncontrolled, undisciplined and without shame, are now marching to certain destruction.

Now Dickens, whatever else may be urged against him, was and remains essentially a clean English writer. It is interesting to know that, during this war, as in the last, the men are clamouring for Dickens, because Dickens still has the power to move great masses of mankind; Sam Weller has never lost his popularity, and Oliver Twist has never ceased to ask for more. And in speaking of the influence of Dickens, none compares with his outlook on the child; right throughout his books he still shows how all types of men and women may become subjected to redemptive and rejuvenating influences springing from child life with its humanising effects. Dickens shows most conclusively that the self may be cleansed by its purifying stream, and all this because of his own childhood, the dominating thing in his life.

Unity comes from within, and the spiritual unity of the Empire is built up by service; how otherwise shall we be able to keep a straight furrow? Common material needs and uniformity of ideals should create more lasting ties in our friendship with all English-speaking peoples, and I dream of the spirit of Dickens as a means of uniting all peoples of British descent after this German madness is over.

Rudyard Kipling said that as time went on Dickens seemed to grow more and more modern. There is subtle truth in this statement, namely, that the real modernity of Dickens suggests that there can be no doubt of the value of Dickens at a time like this, for the world has never been in such tragic need of the broad humanity of Dickens in a world which claims to be civilised.

Dickens was always so sane in his writings; he saw so clearly, and realised the invariable consequences of selfish or sinful actions. It seems to have become part of his philosophy that the need for punish-

ment in the individual can never be lost sight of. We can find dozens of instances in his literature. Just one occurs to me. Do you recall Mrs. Clennam saying on one occasion in reference to Dorrit, who was confined in a Debtors' Prison: "I admit that I was an accessory in this man's captivity; I have suffered for it in kind; he has decayed in his prison; I have paid the penalty." Dickens, himself a most energetic man, never had any time for shirkers, and held the view that it was better to justify existence by some downright useful work, even if only spread over a limited time, than live to a great old age useless and forgotten.

We do not know what this war has in store for us, but if we are asked here in Australia to make bigger and yet bigger sacrifices he will best be able to do the right thing who has best conceived the spirit of Dickens in an unselfish life devotion to the highest cause. The truth is that no nation can, in the future, live in splendid isolation. Every one of us is part of a network of relationships, relationships dealing with feeding, protection of one sort or another, support, and so on *ad infinitum*. It has been the rule in the past for one party not only to exploit the other, but to exploit it in such a way that the independence of both is seriously affected, and things may come to such a pass that, poised upon a cliff-edge, we may readily overbalance and bring upon ourselves changes, different and unexpected, and what is to happen in the unknown future is as much a biological problem as any which we have had to face in the exhausted past. No wonder we hear as a voice crying in the wilderness the necessity of reconstructive thought due to the restlessness of our time. Stephen Blackpool, in *Hard Times*, by his utterance upon the chaotic conditions of domestic strife of the time of which Dickens wrote, gives us a peep into the mind of the author himself, and the words which Dickens puts into the mouth of the kind, simple-minded man constitute after all, the sum and substance of that humanitarian spirit which is necessary in any approach to a practical solution. Addressing Bounderby, the mill-owner, his master, at the crisis of a strike:

"Sir," says Stephen, "I canna, wi' my little learning an' my common way, tell the genelman what will better aw this—above my powers—but I can tell him what I know will never do't. The strong hand will never do't. Victory and triumph will never do't. Agreeing fur to mak' one side unnat'rally awlus and for ever right, and toother side unnat'rally awlus and for ever wrong, will never, never do't. Nor yet lettin alone will never do't . . . Most o' aw, ratin' 'em as so much Power, and reg'latin' 'em as if they was figures in a soom, or machines; wi'out loves and likeins, wi'out memories and inclinations, wi'out souls to weary and souls to hope . . . this will never do't."

And so, realising his utter helplessness in a world of muddle and confusion, concludes with—"Heaven help us aw in this world."

A fitting ending to all our fears for futurity—God help us all; and bless us every one!

TONY WELLER IN THE TOILS

BY ANDREW PATERSON

[Montreal, 1st April. Two German prisoners were discovered attempting to escape from an internment camp concealed in pianos. By Cable.]

LONDONERS were astonished to learn this morning that the veteran coachman, Tony Weller, had been consigned to the Tower of London on a charge of aiding and abetting the escape of two German prisoners of war in Canada.

Weller, it was alleged, had some time ago devised a scheme to enable one Samuel Pickwick to escape from the Fleet Prison, where he had been incarcerated for debt. According to the plan, Weller proposed to construct what he described as a "pianner forty," one that would have "no vurks" in it, in which the said Pickwick could hide.

Details of this plan were conveyed to the German prisoners by means of a copy of the *Pickwick Papers* presented to the prison library. Two men actually adopted the scheme. Fortunately, when the pianos were dumped on the sidewalk, an agonising "Ouch!" was heard. Bystanders, puzzled why a stringed or percussion instrument should suddenly appear to be a wind instrument, peeped inside and discovered the two escaping prisoners, who were then recaptured.

Weller was brought up at the Old Bailey to-day, and the trial proved to be the most extraordinary ever witnessed at that celebrated court. Accused was defended by Mr. Solomon Pell, "a friend of the Lord Chancellorship's." At the strong instigation of his client Pell endeavoured to establish an "alleybi." He pointed out that Weller had been described by Charles Dickens as far back as 1837 as a "stout, red-faced, elderly man." That was over a hundred years ago, and therefore, Mr. Pell argued, Weller must have been long since dead and unable to conspire with anyone to-day.

In rebuttal, Serjeant Buzfuz, for the prosecution, placed in the witness box Mr. Walter Dexter, Editor of *The Dickensian*, and other admirers of Dickens. These witnesses testified that, far from being dead, Tony Weller was as much alive as ever.

Having failed to establish this "alleybi," Mr. Pell next endeavoured to have the indictment quashed on the ground that Weller's name was wrongly spelled.

A heated discussion between counsel ensued, in the course of which Weller, becoming impatient, exclaimed aloud, "Put it down a 'we,' my lord, put it down a 'we.'"

This was an unlucky interjection, for the erudite Buzfuz pounced upon it, showed that Germans habitually confused "w's" with "v's," and contended that this proved Weller was of German origin.

Striking corroboration was instantly forthcoming. "A young lady," who claimed that she "superintended the domestic arrangements at the Blue Boar, Leaden'all Markit," was called as a witness, and on being sworn told the court that on one occasion she had heard Weller's son, Sam, greet his father with the salutation, "Vell, my Prooshan Blue!"

There was some sensation in the court at this unexpected revelation, as the next witness, Samuel Weller, the son of the prisoner, for, to the

amazement of all present, he was instantly recognized by the judge, Mr. Justice Stareleigh, as a person whom he had had occasion, at a former session of the Court, to reprimand for revealing military secrets by repeating what "the soldier said," and accordingly the Judge ordered him to be placed in the dock with his father.

Considerable disorder took place as the officials endeavoured to carry out his lordship's instructions. Mr. Pickwick, from the public gallery, claimed that the younger Weller was his man-servant, and loudly protested at what he termed the "vile and calumnious" action of the court.

Unhappily for this interruptor, the keen-eyed Buzfuz drew the court's attention to the fact that Mr. Pickwick had on a former occasion been discovered making use of secret codes, codes which could be useful to the enemy, codes in which secret messages were conveyed under the guise of "Chops and Tomata Sauce," "Slow coach" and "Warming pan." He would therefore move that Pickwick also be arrested.

In support of his motion, Buzfuz asked that Pickwick's companion, Mr. Nathaniel Winkle, be examined, and under a terrific grilling this unhappy witness admitted that he had known Pickwick to confer with one Count Smorltork, "the famous foreigner," and to impart important information to him about England; also that Pickwick had made notes at a well-known garrison city somewhere in England, and had in fact upset important military manoeuvres by getting in the way of the soldiers.

At these sensational revelations the court seethed with excitement, which spread even to the representatives of the press, one of whom, Mr. Pott, editor of the "Eatanswill Gazette," came to blows with Mr. Slurk, editor of the "Eatanswill Independent", their brief bags being used as weapons of assault. Before the police could interfere, the combatants were separated by Samuel Weller.

Order was eventually restored, the rival editors having to be bled into a state of pernicious anæmia by the eminent surgeon, Mr. Sawyer (late Nockemorf), who was assisted by his equally distinguished colleague, Mr. Benjamin Allen.

The foreman of the jury, Mr. Blotton, of Aldgate, at this stage intervened to state that as it was now a long time since they had breakfast, his fellow-jurors were hungry and wished to have the proceedings concluded.

His lordship then woke up and proceeded to review the evidence. In summing up he pointed out that if the jury considered that the prisoners had done the various things alleged, then they must find them guilty. On the other hand, if the prisoners had not done those things then the verdict must be one of "not guilty." And if they were not guilty, he wanted to know what the Dickens they were doing in the dock.

Mr. Blotton then announced that the jury had agreed without leaving the box that the prisoners had done the various things with which they were charged, but only in a Pickwickian sense. That being so, the verdict was "Not guilty," but also in a Pickwickian sense.

His lordship agreed that the jury had come to a wise decision, and told the prisoners they could leave the dock but not without a stain on their characters. Mr. Pott and Mr. Sturk were also bound over to keep the peace and left the Court, to renew their hostilities—on paper.

As the court prepared to adjourn, Mr. Pickwick mounted on to a chair and, " with one hand gracefully concealed behind his coat tails, and the other waving in the air to assist his glowing declamation," paid tribute to the acumen of the judge and the learned counsel, not forgetting the jury, and concluded by calling for three cheers for the Constitution, which were heartily given, the applause being led by Mr. Samuel Weller.

The only discordant note was a dispute between Mr. Tony Weller and his counsel, Mr. Solomon Pell, the former refusing bluntly to pay the fee demanded by the latter, as he had failed to establish the " alleybi." From later information we learn that this dispute was amicably settled at an oyster supper, which was attended also by Mr. Samuel Weller and some professional friends of his father.

THE SUBTLETIES OF MR. F'S AUNT

I HATE a fool.

* * * * *

Let him meet it if he can.

* * * * *

Don't believe it's his doing.

* * * * *

There's milestones on the Dover road.

* * * * *

When we lived at Henley, Barnes's gander was stole by tinkers.

* * * * *

Drat him if he an't come back again.

* * * * *

None of your eyes at me. Take that !

* * * * *

Bring him for'ard, and I'll chuck him out o' winder.

* * * * *

He has a proud stomach, this chap. Give him a meal of chaff ! It's the only thing for a proud stomach.

* * * * *

If he wanted to get rid of her, let him chuck her out of the winder.

* * * * *

He needn't take no credit to himself for it.

* * * * *

The Monument near London Bridge, was put up arter the Great Fire of London ; and the Great Fire of London was not the fire in which your uncle George's workshops was burned down.

* * * * *

Let him eat up every morsel. Drat him, give him a meal of chaff.

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It'll be long enough, I expect, afore he'll give up any of his own money.

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You can't make a head and brains out of a brass knob with nothing in it. You couldn't do it when your uncle George was living ; much less when he's dead.

MRS. PICKWICK—A DENIAL

By T. KENT BRUMLEIGH

THE title of the article in the Spring Number has caused me to rub my eyes; aye, and scratch my head. Then I laughed. What? A Mrs. Pickwick! Mr. Pickwick, the ideal single gentleman and the idol of over a century, a widower? No, I cannot believe it! One might as well visualise a Lady Falstaff behind the great Sir John.

And yet, on a second reading, Mr. Hill seems to make out a plausible case. Of course I flew straight to the immortal record of the great man's career to see whether I could trace in Mr. Hill's evidence any support for the existence of a defunct Mrs. Pickwick. Fortunately for what little sanity I have I cannot find that his conclusions have any foundation whatever in spite of his array of facts.

I think we may trust Dickens for knowing what he was about when he wrote *The Pickwick Papers*; he denied us any further knowledge of Mr. Pickwick's past than the two facts that (*a*) he had slid on the gutters as a boy, and (*b*) that he had, when in business, an agent in Liverpool. Whatever Dickens's reasons we may be assured that they were good ones, and to try, as Mr. Hill does, first to create a bulkhead between Pickwick's previous life and the record, and then to assume that this screens an impenetrable fog of mystery, and immediately to pretend to pierce the barrier he has created, is sheer impertinence. And how in the world can one penetrate the impenetrable?

Then consider the contrivance Mr. Hill uses for this penetration; a preposterous contraption of Sam Weller's invention: "a pair of patent double magnifyin' gas microscopes of hextra power." My hat! Gas microscopes, forsooth! Must Mr. Hill depend on an instrument more than one hundred years old when he can command the newest apparatus of modern science? And, having applied his mental eye to this antiquated affair, what does he find? A tall, sparely-built woman in a black dress, lacking personal attraction and charm, and hen-pecking poor Mr. Pickwick (our beloved Samuel) till she finally worries herself literally to death. Gracious heavens! as Sergeant Buzfuz would say.

Is Mr. Hill quite sure that this is what he sees in that impenetrable fog? Is it not more likely that the lenses of his old-fashioned gas microscopes are dirty and clouded with the fumes of gas as well as the accumulated dust of years? Or is he perhaps suffering from cataract or spots and films due to biliousness? Or any other defect of vision?

Moreover, I don't think I can conceive that a man of Mr. Pickwick's type, amiable and genial, would choose for his partner a woman of sharp outlines, acid temper, and unattractive exterior and clothes.

But let me examine a little more closely the other evidence, and I notice first of all that Mr. Hill formulates his theory and then makes his so-called facts fit it, instead of first marshalling his facts and afterwards founding his theory thereon.

We have an imposing list of the stirring events through which Mr. Pickwick had lived. Granted; but couldn't he remain single and still

live through them ? Was it necessary to postulate that he was married for him to enjoy life at home so much that he seldom went out ? And even that is begging the question ; surely a single man may be so happy in his home occupied with scientific studies that he may have no desire to rush away on the smallest, or any, provocation. Mr. Pickwick was a student (he said so) and Natural Philosophy was his hobby. Hence his Theory of Tittlebats and his intensive search for the sources of the Mighty Ponds of Hampstead. (What matter if we do not even now know what his theory of Tittlebats was, or where he found the source of the ponds ?) We may be certain that the pursuit of his hobby gave him a great deal of pleasure and that he did not want a wife messing about at his elbow while he was deep in study.

I cannot think that being married would have assisted in any way the decision of the seventeen scientific societies who honoured him with membership after his memorable discovery of the Cobham Stone, leading to the celebrated Pickwickian Controversy. Other great discoverers like Galileo, Newton, and Stanley were not married ; why should a wife have to be found for Mr. Pickwick.

A great deal of fuss is made of Mr. Pickwick's so-called ignorance of sports and games, and a long list is given of the things he is supposed not to be able to do, and then follows the fatuous conclusion that a wife had prevented him from indulging in outdoor recreation of any kind. By the way, I do not like that word ignorance ; I should rather have said innocence. The record is, however, of adventures, perils, etc., and does not pretend to be an intimate account of every minute of Mr. Pickwick's life. Dear me ! we might conclude that because on only one occasion (at Ipswich) is he said to have wound up his watch he left it unwound for the rest of his life, and had no knowledge of horology. Perhaps Mr. Hill would like to say that even this was evidence of his having been married and that he left such small details to his wife.

I could supply Mr. Hill with a long catalogue of things that, on equally good grounds, Mr. Pickwick could not do, just because they are omitted from the record. For example, he couldn't row a boat, although judging from the illustrated cover, he had some acquaintance with a punt ; he did not know how to fish, although the same cover shews him in a characteristic situation for a tired fisherman overcome after a substantial luncheon fast asleep in the punt with the disregarded line hanging over the side ; golf, chess, draughts, or even spillikins, are not mentioned in the book, so, of course, by Mr. Hill's method of deduction, Mr. Pickwick could not play any of them. Dear me !

I must deal with one more of Mr. Hill's conclusions. He says, with great truth, that Mr. Pickwick had in his psychical make-up a decided strain of philoprogenetiveness, and then adduces this as a sign that he had been married. I feel flabbergasted, flummoxed ! Has Mr. Hill never heard of a "universal uncle" ? an unmarried man (generally elderly like Mr. Pickwick) who is very much at home with young people ; one who is hailed, particularly by children, with open arms and shouts

of welcome ? Was it necessary for Mr. Pickwick to have been married in order to find his way to Tommy Bardell's heart with presents of sweets and marbles ? Is it not distinctly stated in the record that after his retirement from public life at the comparatively early age of fifty-two or thereabouts, the children of Dulwich idolised him (probably with a view to sweets and marbles) while the poor people shewed him a great respect (probably not wholly unconnected with pecuniary gifts) ?

It must have been necessary, on Mr. Hill's argument, for Mr. Pickwick to serve an unpleasant apprenticeship with an uncongenial partner, to cause him to be kind-hearted and solicitous for the welfare of his three followers, the Wardle family, the Wellers, and the contrite Jingle and Trotter. This leaves me gasping. It seems such nonsense.

I must admire, however, the ingenuity of Mr. Hill's special pleading in connection with the really straightforward evidence that Mr. Pickwick had never been married. Scorn is poured on Serjeant Buzfuz's statement that Mr. Pickwick had asked Tommy Bardell " how would you like to have another father ? " Of course a lawyer in a responsible position would not speak without his brief and the Serjeant had been properly instructed (Dodson and Fogg would look after that)—one can almost see the " sensation in Court " at this point. Again, Mr. Hill thinks that Mr. Pickwick did " protest too much " in his emphatic " never, never " to Peter Magnus's question whether he had ever proposed marriage to a lady, whereas I can only see his horror at the very idea. Then, melting in his genial wish to be helpful to an embarrassed fellow-creature, he admits that he *may* have formed some ideas as to how a proposal should be made. How natural is all this in a single gentleman ! Again, it is affirmed that Sam Weller could not know that Mr. Pickwick was single, when it is almost certain that the first thing a man engaging a valet would tell him would be that he was alone and without any female companion.

No, it won't do. I am left more convinced than ever that Mr. Pickwick was never married and had never had any intention of being married. Indeed, the whole case is given away in Mr. Hill's own words : " the catalogue of Mr. Pickwick's activities is compatible and consistent with what might be attributed to a man who had been married and knew something of sociality, although I recognise that *much could be equally well associated with a single gentleman.*" The italics are mine, and, in Serjeant Buzfuz's phrase : that's my case. And, what about all this blather of using gas microscopes to see vague outlines ; shadows of a female endowed with the physical aspect of a Pipchin and the temper of a MacStinger ? Fie, fie ! Really, Mr. H., really !

(*Continued from page* 142)

so great a sensation in the periodical literature of the present day. His lady is an unaffected agreeable person, and we regret that their too short visit to Quebec did not permit us to improve an acquaintance from which we had anticipated much pleasure.

PEEPS AT DICKENS

Pen Pictures from Contemporary Sources

XXXIX.—In Quebec

From the "Quebec Gazette," 28th May, 1842*

MR. DICKENS (Boz) and his lady arrived in this city yesterday morning by the steamboat *Lady Colborne* from Montreal, and departed again in the afternoon; they were accompanied by the Earl of Mulgrave, who had been their fellow passenger across the Atlantic, and who, since their arrival in Canada East, has shown them every kindness which his rank and station enable him to offer. They proceeded, on landing, to the house of Dr. Fisher, where they breakfasted†, and then set out to view the Citadel, where they met with every attention from the officers of the Grenadier Guards, now forming the garrison. Having viewed the works and enjoyed the beautiful prospect they command, they visited the Plains of Abraham and took a cursory view of the city. After their excursion they partook of a Déjeuner à la Fourchette with the officers of the Grenadiers and then returned to the steamboat which was to convey them to Montreal. They were fortunate in having a fine day for their visit and the magnificent scenery appeared to great advantage.

We had the pleasure of seeing Mr. and Mrs. Dickens for a few minutes: they both appeared highly pleased with the reception they had experienced in Canada and regretted that their arrangements did not permit them to make a longer stay in Quebec, with the appearance and scenery of which they expressed the highest admiration. They have, in England, a family of four children, and in leaving this city the *ultima thule* of their peregrinations, Mrs. Dickens did not conceal her feelings as a mother that her progress would, from this point, be a return to those fond objects of her maternal solicitude. So much has been written of Boz that we can only add the impression our short interview enabled us to form was that, though a popular author, he is no pedant, by no means desires to make a display, and is much better pleased at being quietly and kindly received as Mr. Dickens, travelling for amusement, than as the Boz whose works have created

(*Continued at foot of previous page*)

* Kindly supplied by Arthur G. Penny, Editor-in-Chief, "Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph," Quebec.

† John Charlton Fisher, LL.D., was born at Carlisle in 1794. A journalist by profession, he migrated to America and became editor of the "Albion" in New York. In 1823 he was appointed editor of the "Quebec Gazette" as well as King's Printer. In those days the "Gazette" appears to have been an official gazette as well as a newspaper.

Dr. Fisher early entered into the social life of the city. In 1824 he was treasurer and corresponding secretary of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, and became its president in 1846.

The Quebec Directory gives Dr. Fisher's address as Queen's Printer at 6 Mountain Street, and as living at 7 Ste. Genevieve Street, in the district of the city known as "The Cape". It may be presumed that it was to this latter address that Dickens was taken for breakfast when he visited Quebec, and it may be taken for granted that the personal impressions of Dickens that appeared in the "Quebec Gazette" on the following day were written by Dr. Fisher.—Andrew Paterson.

THE TWO SPIRITS OF FUN AND BEAUTY

By J. H. McNULTY

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT is the first novel written after Dickens's powers had reached full maturity; it is thus in a sense his literary coming of age, and as befits such a festive occasion it opens with a burst of high spirits. No other book begins in such a hilarious mood. He had just had that magnificent holiday in Cornwall, with Stanfield and Maclise, of which he writes: "If you could have followed us into the earthy old churches we visited, and into the strange caverns on the gloomy sea-shore, and down into the depths of mines, and up to the tops of giddy heights where the unspeakably green water was roaring, I don't know how many hundred feet below! If you could have seen but one gleam of the bright fires by which we sat in the big rooms of the ancient inns at night, until long after the small hours had come and gone . . . I do believe there never was such a trip. And they made such sketches, those two men, in the most romantic of our halting-places, that you would have sworn we had the Spirit of Beauty with us, as well as the Spirit of Fun." That gives the keynote of the book, for these two spirits not only accompanied the holiday-makers, but fill the book which follows.

The Spirit of Fun is seen in the opening chapter which describes the pedigree of the Chuzzlewit family, a splendid piece of fooling. The Spirit of Beauty comes in with the description of the late autumn afternoon in the "little Wiltshire village, within an easy journey of the fair old town of Salisbury." It is a lovely picture, with all the sadness of farewell which marks an autumn landscape. As the sun goes down, the Spirit of Fun again enters the story, for then there rises that jolly frolicsome wind which plays such pranks with the dead leaves, makes the fire at the forge burn so brightly and the sparks dance even more gaily, which makes the Blue Dragon so rampant and then knocks down Mr. Pecksniff at his own doorway, without doing him any serious injury, and blows open for us the pages of this delightful story.

The writing of the book must have been as enjoyable as the holiday that preceded it. Dickens knew it was greater than its predecessors, the public did not, and for some reason never adequately explained, it failed, but it was a happy failure for the result was the glorious fun of the American episode, and *A Christmas Carol*. *The Carol* would have been written later, no doubt, but the sooner the better. It is the irritation in the oyster that produces the pearl, with poets it is *indignatio facit versus*, and disappointment at the failure of the great novel produced the wonderfully successful little volume.

Martin Chuzzlewit, which opens with a description of the autumn landscape and the merry autumn gale, is richer than any other in its pictures of Nature. There is the dark dreary night, and the cautious wind which creeps upon the ground and "Stops to listen and goes rustling on, and stops again, and follows, like a savage on the trail." What a fitting prelude to the ill-starred American adventure! There is the hot silent night, with a threat of thunder, when the sky was

filled with clouds " which shone with a lurid light like monstrous heaps of copper that had been heated in a furnace, and were growing cold," when Jonas set out with murder in his heart. It has ever been the custom of man to see in the changing moods of Nature a picture of his own feelings. The storm on the heath in " Lear " harmonises with the storm of anger in the heart of the outraged monarch. In " Paradise Lost " nature is moved by man's first disobedience. Browning has expressed the idea beautifully in " Paracelsus " :

" . . . the winds
Are henceforth voices, wailing or a shout,
A querulous mutter or a quick gay laugh,
Never a senseless gust now man is born.
The herded pines commune and have deep thoughts,
A secret they assemble to discuss
When the sun drops behind their trunks which glare
Like grates of hell."

The vividness of the writing is very marked throughout the book and in no part is it more in evidence than in the description of Todgers's. Where was this wonderful spot ? " Somewhere in London," but beyond that all is vague, uncertain, and mere conjecture. But could even London produce such a place ? Is it not rather the dream, the fair imagination of a poet where dwells :

" The light that never was on sea or land
The inspiration and the poet's dream."

One fancies that all who entered its enchanted portals would be changed. The dullest person would find his dullness transformed into delightful drollery, the most commonplace would be touched with phantasy. It was here that Jinkins, Gander, Moddle, Bailey, and Mrs. Todgers lived. It was from Todgers's that Mr. Pecksniff visited the house of the brass and copper founder, and met, for once, a bigger snob than himself. It was here that the great banquet was given in honour of the two Miss Pecksniffs, when Mr. Pecksniff exceeded his usual moderation. To say he was the worse for drink is to pay him a compliment he certainly does not deserve. However funny he was when drunk, he was perfectly sober when he made the priceless remark about sirens. " Pagan, I regret to say," the force of Pecksniff could no further go.

Martin Chuzzlewit differs from the earlier novels, and from most of the later ones, in this. It attacks not a mere social evil, but one that is universal, selfishness. In Pecksniff it is covered with a thick layer of unctuous, pretentious piety and hypocrisy ; in young Martin it is the selfishness of youth which expects that all should give way to its wishes ; in Jonas it is brutality naked and unashamed. It is chiefly in the Chuzzlewit family that the vice is most apparent and this is a family book where very many of the characters are related. Here are vice and virtue side by side, the hypocrite Pecksniff and the sincere Tom Pinch, the faithful Chuffey, and the brutal Jonas, the self-centred Martin and the self-forgetful Mark Tapley, and there is besides a horde of legacy-hunting relatives, the Spottletoes, the strong-minded

woman " with her half-pay officer's gaze," the deaf cousin, and the rest of the shabby crowd.

It is said by Quiller-Couch in his book " Shakespeare's Workmanship," that in Macbeth the poet has flattened the smaller characters to bring out more clearly the greatness of Macbeth. This is the reverse of the method used by Dickens, for his minor characters are as great in their way as his greater ones. It is a difference in quantity not in quality. It is remarkable how little we know of these people sometimes, not even their names, sometimes we hardly hear them speak or see them, yet we are left like hungry Olivers asking for more. We do not know the name of Mr. F's Aunt, nor the name of the interpreter in *Our Mutual Friend* who says but one word, " Esker," though he repeats it several times. The Analytical Chemist never speaks at all though he was once prompted to do so. In *Martin Chuzzlewit* there is a character who never even appears though her words are often quoted—Mrs. Harris. To doubt her existence is to forfeit the friendship of Mrs. Gamp, a terrible penalty, for who would miss the wonderful conversations of that amazing lady? While Pecksniff and Mrs. Gamp are well-known to all, Mr. Mould is left in comparative obscurity. Yet he deserves fame, he had a face in which a queer " attempt at melancholy was at odds with a smirk of satisfaction so that he looked as a man might, who in the very act of smacking his lips over a choice old wine, tried to make believe it was a physic." He was in great form at Anthony Chuzzlewit's funeral where his joy at all the funeral trappings, and admiration at the filial affection of Jonas, shown by the lavish expenditure, caused him some trouble with his features which had at intervals to be composed so as to appear decorously sorrowful.

Mrs. Mould is a fitting helpmeet to this happy and superior undertaker. She makes her one grim joke by changing the word " beech " into " elm " in the old song, thus producing the beautiful line, " The woodpecker tapping the hollow elm tree." Naturally this delighted her husband and sends him into ecstasies of merriment.

> " Ha, ha ! " laughed Mr. Mould. " Not at all bad, my dear. We shall be glad to hear from you again, Mrs. M. Hollow elm tree, eh ! Ha, ha ! very good indeed. I've seen worse than that in the Sunday papers, my love."

It is her only joke, and a poor one at that. It may remind us of Lord Decimus Barnacle's solitary anecdote and pun about Eaton pears and Parliamentary pairs, or Casby chortling over his silly little quip : " You are paid to squeeze and must squeeze to pay." There is something rather pathetic in this, for how deadly dull and commonplace must be the conversation of these people who are so pleased with their poor little ghost of a joke. We should pity them for they are too stupid to know how stupid they are, being so self-satisfied they are saved from seeing their own lack of wit or wisdom. Mrs. Gamp never makes a joke, but her language is a " thing of beauty and joy for ever."

There is another character here, and in all the novels—Eating. It assumes such an importance as to be a real character, or if that

be too strong a word, it is a sure indication of character. The horrible banquet Pecksniff prepared as a welcome to Martin, "with its long slim sandwiches, gritty oranges, and currant wine." To drink that wine was to pass the *acid* test, and Pinch seemed to be the only one who successfully passed it. It was a showy banquet as empty of substance as its giver. John Westlock's feast in honour of Tom Pinch, where there was plenty of every kind of excellent food and "a table spread for three with silver and glass for thirty," is not greediness but generosity. Here Dickens supplies the appetite as well as the food by the long walk in the wind and snow. Dickens is the novelist of eating, Meredith the novelist of drinking. A rigid teetotaller might feel a scruple at enjoying Meredith's vivid description of "an ancient and a great wine," and a vegetarian, somewhat devoid of humour, would certainly fail to enjoy the generous fare provided by Dickens.

As the book draws to a close, the spirits which were present at the beginning, which have so often appeared during the progress of the story, are again clearly visible, the Spirit of Fun appears in the farewell letter of Mr. Moddle, and the Spirit of Beauty in the strains of music with which the story ends.

The Americans have long since forgiven the attack upon them; the English, perhaps, never fully appreciated that Pecksniff was a satire on one of their least amiable characteristics; the public has made full amends for its neglect; and whatever may be the final verdict on the book, all will agree that it is the first of the novels which has a claim to be among the greatest.

PRACTICAL SYMPATHY FROM OVERSEAS

SINCE we recorded in the Summer number of last year, the several spontaneous money gifts sent to us from Overseas to aid our Little Ones who have especially felt the spite of our enemies, the flow of money has continued. In the distribution of the funds we have been assisted by the branches in some of the cities on which the scourge of the Hun has fallen; and we have now to acknowledge the following additional donations for this truly Dickensian work. The Boz Club, and members of the Toronto Branch of the Fellowship, £55; Winnipeg Branch, £5; Mrs. William Dike Reed, of Milwaukee, £5; East Bay Branch, £2 7 -, bringing the total receipts to £225. The Philadelphia Branch followed up their $100 Christmas treat to Camden Town children last year by sending a similar sum this year.

Above all, we are proud to record the result, so far, of the work of the special committee set up by the Vancouver Branch. This now amounts to no less than one hundred pounds. Thank you, Vancouver!

The Cratchit Shelter Fund which includes $10 sent by Mr. G. Franklin Luddington, and £12 7s. 0d. by our Branch at Madison, Wis., now stands at £222. It is being distributed among vital war charities.

For the general funds of the Dickens Fellowship we have gratefully to acknowledge: £6 from the Worcester (Pa.) Branch, and ten shillings each from Mr. A. R. Rule and Anon. Donations specially sent to *The Dickensian* are acknowledged by the Editor on page 130. L. C. S.

THE STAPLEHURST RAILWAY ACCIDENT

By T. W. HILL

I.

ONE of the fairest prospects in this "fair and pleasant land" of England, "this other Eden, demi-paradise," is the Weald of Kent. The Weald is a wide, fertile, well-watered valley extending right across the county from east to west, and only fifty or sixty feet above sea-level. The surface is nearly flat, with faintly rolling low hills gradually merging into the Downs, North and South, with smoothly swelling slopes.

From the "Illustrated Times," June 17th, 1865

In early summer the fields, all well-cultivated, are a delicious restful light green with growing crops of wheat, barley, and oats, varied by darker green market gardens, grassy expanses spangled with wild flowers, dotted here and there with sheep and cattle, and hop gardens with poles like spiders' webs up which the vines can just be discerned. Orchards and woods of beech, birch, and oak give variety to the view, backed as it is by the gently rolling Downs, in many places capped with dark green firs standing clear-cut against the blue sky flecked with masses of cumulus clouds.

The main railway line from Dover to London runs along the centre of this beautiful valley, and the long trails of fleecy steam, brilliantly white in the sun, add a picturesque touch to the smiling landscape. The roar of the passing trains hardly disturbs the silence of the peaceful countryside. There are no large towns, and from Tonbridge to Ashford, about twenty-three miles, there is scarcely any gradient and practically

no curve to be found. So straight and safe is this section of railway that it is often called the " galloping ground."

Dickens knew this part of Kent well, not only because he lived for so many years in the county, but also because he used this line of railway on his frequent journeys to and from the Continent. This was doubtless why he chose this district as the scene for the death in 1848 of Carker, in *Dombey and Son*, after his hurried departure from Dijon pursued by Mr. Dombey*. Did this portend what was to happen to Dickens himself on the same line nearly twenty years later ?

II.

On the afternoon of Friday, June 9th, 1865, the sun shone warm and pleasant on this delectable valley, when the peace and quiet of the district was shocked and shattered by the crash of a dreadful railway accident, mingled with the shouts and orders of harassed officials, the menacing and strident hiss of escaping steam, and the cries and moans of injured and dying passengers.

About a third of the way between Staplehurst and Headcorn, two small towns (little more than villages) of less than 1,500 souls each, there is a shallow dip, at the bottom of which is the bed of a stream, the river Beult, and this is crossed by a bridge, technically (if somewhat grandiloquently) known as a viaduct, then consisting of eight spans of twenty-one feet, formed of cast-iron girders supporting heavy timber baulks carrying the railway track, and all of sound construction. In 1865 the rail level was only ten feet above the bed of the stream. The so-called river is, in summer, not much more than a sedgy trickle, but after rain it often overflows its flat marshy borders, and can in a really wet season become lakelike in appearance. This was the scene of the accident in which ten people—seven women and three men—lost their lives and forty others were injured.

It was Dickens's fate to be involved in this accident, and as most of the accounts have contained several mistakes, it is hoped that this description, as accurate as possible in every detail, may become the reliable record to which any future enquirer may be referred. The circumstances that gave rise to Dickens's presence were these. In the previous February he had a serious illness and the lameness began in his left foot which never afterwards wholly left him. At the end of May he " had worked himself into a damaged state," and tried to regain some of his nervous strength by making a short visit to France ; on his return on Friday, June 9th, he came by the " tidal " train, so called because it ran at a different time, altered every few days, depending on the state of the tide in the harbours concerned. The cross-channel boats at that period could only enter and leave at or near high tide ; nowadays dredging in the harbours and other improvements enable the boats to enter at any state of the tide and the term " tidal " has fallen into disuse ; the trains that make connection with the boats are still familiarly called boat-trains.

* See *The Dickensian*, 1938, page 123.

III.

On that June 9th Dickens's train left Folkestone at 2.38 p.m. and passed Headcorn strictly to time at 3.11, running at an estimated speed of about fifty miles an hour as the line in this section is dead straight with a very slight down gradient. Now it so happened that in the course of routine repairs it had been decided on that day to renew the last of the timber baulks in the "viaduct" over the Beult. To do this two rails had been lifted to the side of the track just at the eastern approach to the structure. In the ordinary course this could be managed between trains where the times of running were known, but by a very unfortunate mischance the foreman of the platelayers consulted the wrong page of his time-table, and instead of expecting the tidal train to pass Headcorn at 3.11 p.m., he noted the time as 5.20 (the time it would be due on the following day) and arranged his work accordingly. The consequence was that everyone was taken by surprise. The foreman's duty was to see that signal protection was given, and the South-Eastern Railway Company's rules (much in advance of those of some other companies at that time) required a flagman to proceed 1,000 yards from any obstruction, putting down a fog-signal every 250 yards and two more at his point of duty, where he was also required to show a red flag. But the flagman only went about 550 yards on this occasion and did not use any fog-signals at all. Other evidence seemed to show that he spoke the truth about the position he took up, although the driver of the train stated that the man was much nearer the viaduct. At the official enquiry, held on behalf of the Board of Trade by Colonel F. H. Rich, it transpired that the rules had been consistently disregarded during the whole time that the work of renewing the timber baulks had been in progress, and that the permanent-way inspector had done nothing to set the matter right.

The train was made up as follows: engine and tender, guard's luggage van, second-class coach, seven first-class coaches, two second-class coaches, and three luggage vans (with two more guards). There were 115 passengers on the train—80 first-class and 35 second-class. The driver, owing to the straightness of the track and the clear summer air, saw the look-out's red flag, though at what precise point is not certain, and, in the distance the gap in the rails where they had been removed. He immediately applied his own brakes, reversed his engine, and whistled for the guards to apply their brakes. Those were the days before "continuous" brakes controlled from the engine and acting on all wheels simultaneously. The guard in the front van had a hand brake and could apply Cremer's patent brake (which was brought into action by spring-power) on the next two vehicles (the second-class and the leading first-class coach) while the two rear guards also had hand brakes. The remaining vehicles had no brakes. None of the guards saw the flagman or perceived what was wrong ahead.

The distance between the application of the brakes and the Beult valley was so short that the train reached the viaduct at a speed of probably twenty or thirty miles an hour, although the driver declared it was much less. The engine leapt the gap (forty-two feet) in the rails,

and ran to the farther bank of the river-bed, the guard's van was thrown foul of the other —down—track dragging with it the second-class coach. The leading first-class coach in which Dickens was travelling fortunately remained coupled to the second-class coach in front, but hung partly over the side of the viaduct with its rear end resting on the field a few feet below. It should be explained that when the fore part of a train, especially if it has no continuous brakes, becomes derailed and loses speed, the rear part is forced by its impetus against it and the weight thus tends to buckle the line of vehicles. In this case the centre bulged to the left and the vehicles behind, swerving and commencing to run down the bank to the side of the line, pulled those ahead of them off the viaduct, as far as the coach behind that in which Dickens was riding, his being saved by the couplings behind it breaking and those in front not doing so. This explains why some of the first-class carriages came to rest upside down (see *post*). Had the bulge or buckle been the other way the consequences would in all probability not have been so disastrous.

IV.

Dickens's own account written on June 13th to Mitton says: "I was in the only carriage* that did not go over into the stream. It was caught upon the turn by some of the ruins of the bridge and hung suspended and balanced in an impossible manner. Two ladies were my fellow-passengers . . . suddenly we were off the rail and beating the ground as the car of a half-emptied balloon might . . . We were then all tilted down together in a corner of the carriage [which was locked] and stopped . . . I got out through the window without the least notion of what had happened . . with great caution and stood upon the step . . . looking down I saw the bridge gone and nothing below me but the line of rail . . there was an open swampy field fifteen feet below them and nothing else . . . I saw all the rest of the train except the two baggage vans, down in the stream . . . No imagination can conceive the ruin of the carriages."

It is necessary to state that although this vivid account gives a fairly good description of the scene and has been accepted as an accurate account, it is misleading on some points as is proved by the official report. The bridge was not "gone" where his coach stopped and indeed only one girder fell at the other (Headcorn) end of the viaduct. The drop to the river-bed or field was only ten feet, but to terrified passengers the roughly shaken and delicately poised in a precarious position even a few feet of emptiness can be sufficiently appalling. The exact result of the accident was that fortunately for Dickens and his fellow-passengers the coupling behind his carriage broke and the remaining six first-class coaches were precipitated into the dip, two of them upside down and badly broken—practically destroyed on the marshy verge of the river-bank—and four hopelessly smashed to matchwood in the stream; the next two coaches (second-class) left the rails and ran down the bank, the second of them remaining on it, at the approach to the viaduct,

* Clearly a slip for "the only first-class carriage"

while the first of the rear luggage-vans was partly derailed, the others keeping the metals and stopping on the embankment.

V.

In reading any account of a railway accident in 1865 it is desirable to bear in mind that at that time railway travelling was still not very far from its infancy, for it was only thirty-five years since the first

From the "Penny Illustrated Paper," June 24th, 1865

important line had been opened. Rolling stock construction was mostly of wood and not steel-framed as strongly as in modern days, and the signalling practice varied on the lines of each railway company; it is almost within the present century (about 1895) and entirely within living memory that a more or less comprehensive uniform method has been adopted for the whole of the country. (Signalling, in the ordinary sense, had, however, nothing to do with the Staplehurst accident.)

Dickens does not appear to have gone home to Gad's Hill that night, as the following morning he wrote from the office of *All the Year Round* to his friend and medical adviser, Frank Beard: "I was

in the terrible accident yesterday and worked some hours among the dying and dead . . . the terrific nature of the scene makes me think I should be the better for a gentle composing draught or two. I must away to Gad's directly to quiet their minds . . . " The handwriting of the letter is very shaky and there is a pathetic foot-note : " I cannot sign my flourish to-day."

In the letter to Mitton already quoted Dickens describes himself as with " a—I don't know what to call it—constitutional (I suppose) presence of mind, and was not in the least fluttered at the time. I instantly remembered that I had the MS. of a number with me [see the preface of *Our Mutual Friend*] and clambered back into the carriage for it." Not by any means a mean feat for a man with a lameness in his left leg, who had already taken part in the work of rescue. But although he more than once insisted that his nerves were shaken, " not by the beating and dragging of the carriage in which I was . . . but by the work afterwards among the dead and dying," there is no doubt that the two causes together seriously affected his health for the rest of his life. The railway company sent him a resolution of the Directors expressing their appreciation of his actual help and moderating influence, and also presented him with a piece of plate.

On the fifth anniversary (June 9th, 1870) of his trying experience Dickens died.

The viaduct has been reconstructed since then, and the peaceful serenity of this lovely part of Kent will never again, let us hope, be disturbed by any such tragic interruptions in the supply of those products that so appealed to Alfred Jingle Esquire, of No Hall, Nowhere : " Apples, cherries, hops and women."

[Acknowledgement.—I am very greatly indebted to Mr. T. S. Lascelles, Engineer to the W. R. Sykes Interlocking Signal Company, for much help in the compilation of this article. He has closely examined all the evidence in Colonel Rich's Report and has subjected to strict revision the technical details in connection with the accident.—T.W.H.]

PICKWICK IN PRISON AGAIN

Following the suggestion made at the Birthday Dinner in London, the Hon. Secretary forwarded to the Ministry of Supply a resolution that a larger percentage of paper should be devoted to reprinting the Classics than the very small amount already allocated, and we hope it will have the desired effect.

The following paragraph taken from " The Times Literary Supplement " of 11th April shows the real need for an alteration in the existing quota :

> What are the " best-sellers " that are again proving their healing powers in these sad times ? A correspondent writes : " I had great difficulty in a busy London bookshop this week in getting hold of a *Pickwick*. The Oxford Press edition, I was told, is out of print. The bookseller explained that this was due to the great demand for it among prisoners of war. One up for Dickens ! Mr. Pickwick and the faithful Sam in prison again ! "

FANNY KELLY

By LESLIE C. STAPLES

I.

FROM amongst the records of the amateur theatrical ventures of Charles Dickens there emerge few more interesting figures than Fanny Kelly. This remarkable woman provides an extraordinary link between widely separated periods. She acted with Siddons, was the friend of Lamb, played hostess to Dickens and his companions when middle aged, and as a nonagenarian she benefited by the efforts made on her behalf by Sir Henry Irving.

Frances Maria Kelly, born at Brighton in 1790, was the daughter of Mark Kelly and the niece of Michael Kelly, a singer and theatrical composer well known in his day, whose "Recollections," edited by Theodore Hook, appeared in 1826. Her half-sister, Nancy Jackson, became the second wife and the biographer of the elder Mathews.

Encouraged by Michael's success on the stage, Mark relinquished a maritime career and adopted his brother's profession and style of living. As, however, he had not the means to support the latter, difficulties quickly followed, and when Fanny was but five years old he disappeared to escape from his creditors.

Four years later Fanny joined the chorus at Drury Lane, where Uncle Michael was now musical director; in his "Bluebeard" she made her debut. She took her profession very seriously and attracted the attention of the great John Kemble by her constant presence in the wings. Expecting a scolding, she was promoted and given the part of the infant Duke of York, which she shortly afterwards played, to the Richard III of George Frederick Cooke. Two years later she was playing Arthur to the Constance (and the admiration) of Mrs. Siddons, whose opinion of her was shared by Fox, for he afterwards told Sheridan that he was sure the child would rise to the top of her profession.

By the time she was twenty Fanny Kelly was established in leading rôles at Drury Lane, and indeed was the only serious rival to the popular Miss O'Neill, the great Juliet of the day. We read that, "In domestic tragedy she was supreme, her waiting-women were inimitable, and her romps left no room to regret Mrs. Jordan's loss." Although fine ladies were not really within her range, she successfully appeared as Lydia Languish and Lady Teazle, the latter to Dowton's Sir Peter. Another critic said that "The deepest distress of Miss O'Neill in Juliet or Isabella never affects us with the intensity of anguish excited by the efforts of Miss Kelly in 'Rich and Poor.'" Her Lucy in "The Beggar's Opera" was highly successful—"We never saw a more insolent, pettish, charming little wench. She seemed to have spent all her days in Newgate and never to have passed outside the doors except when a man was to be hung or pilloried, and her mode of offering a glass of strong waters to Miss Polly in the prison was a fine specimen of the St. Giles's politeness." On that occasion her sister Lydia was the Polly, and not a successful one; she seldom received the approbation

of the critics although she did not lack opportunities, frequently playing leading Shakespearean rôles with Edmund Kean.

Although possessed of a fine figure, which stood her in good stead when she played masculine rôles, as she frequently did, opinion varied as to Fanny's beauty, but the drawing by Thomas Unwins in the National Portrait Gallery shows a by no means unattractive young lady and one that would seem to have warranted a more enthusiastic description than Charles Lamb's " her divine plain face."

Crabbe Robinson, in his diary, tells of meeting her in Lamb's house, and says, " She pleased me much. She is neither young nor handsome, but very agreeable ; her voice and manner those of a person who knows her own worth but is at the same time not desirous to presume upon it. She talks like a sensible woman."

For no actress of his generation had the gentle Elia a greater admiration. In urging a friend to witness one of her performances, he writes, " You will not see Mrs. Jordan, but something else ; something on the whole very little, if at all, inferior to that lady in her best days . . . Mrs. Jordan's manner of acting was the carelessness of a child ; she seemed one whom care could not come near . . . this latter lady's is the joy of a freed spirit escaping from care as a bird that had been limed." " The Examiner " often printed the warmest praise of her art from his pen, and two of his most beautiful sonnets were inspired by it. But by 1819 the inspiration was not solely her art, for in that year he wrote to her, " I am not so foolish as not to know that I am a most unworthy match for such a one as you, but you have for years been a principal object in my mind. In many a sweet assumed character I have learned to love you, but simply as F. M. Kelly I love you better than them all. Can you quit these shadows of existence and come and be a reality to us ? " himself and his sister, Mary . She replied : " An early and deeply rooted attachment has fixed my heart on one from whom no worldly prospect can well induce me to withdraw it, but while I thus frankly and decidedly decline your proposal, believe me, I am not insensible to the high honour which the preference of such a mind as yours confers upon me — let me, however, hope that all thought upon this subject will end with this letter and that you will henceforth encourage no other sentiment towards me than esteem in my private character and a continuance of that approbation of my humble talents which you have already expressed so much and so often to my advantage and gratification."

Her rejection of his suit may have been influenced by the tragic periodical insanity of his sister, from whom no consideration would have separated him ; or his occasional intemperate habits may have prompted it. Of the deeply rooted attachment of which she speaks nothing is known. Her private life, unlike that of the great majority of the actresses of the period, was never the subject of gossip, indeed she was the most respected of popular favourites. But it is thought that the attachment may have been one which was followed by the birth of her daughter, Mary Ellen Thatcher Gerbini, at Edinburgh in 1829, but it is not known whence was derived the name, which was

later changed to Greville. It would appear that she herself was uncertain of the identity of her father. She never married.

E. V. Lucas suggests that the beautiful "Dream Children" was inspired by the shattered hopes of the essayist, but certain it is that the typically Elian "Barbara S——" was. No reader of Lamb need be reminded of the story of the sensitive child actress who received, in error, more than she was entitled to at the hands of the theatre treasurer and her conflicting emotions on attempting to determine her course of action.

II.

We now approach a period of her life in which Fanny Kelly endeavoured to serve youthful aspirants to theatrical honours. She was never lacking in desire to help those less fortunate than herself, as witness the benefit she organised at Sadler's Wells in 1828 for Joseph Grimaldi, once the idol of that and of the two great patent theatres, but now impoverished by ill-health and ill-fortune. This was followed by another, also at the instance of the same patroness, at Drury Lane, as related in the life of the great clown edited by Dickens some few years later. Her plan was the establishment of a school at which students could serve their apprenticeship to the stage in an atmosphere more conducive to their moral welfare than was generally the case in the rough-and-tumble of a round of the metropolitan and provincial theatres. The scheme was inaugurated in 1832 at the Strand Theatre and quickly became successful. The pupils occasionally gave performances, as also did Miss Kelly, whose entertainments, called "Dramatic Recollections," consisting of scenes from her famous rôles, grave and gay, illustrated her versatility and emphasised her suitability as a teacher. All went well for about seven years, when she decided that a smaller theatre of a more intimate character would better serve her purpose, and under the patronage of the Duke of Devonshire, her life savings and the solicited subscriptions were invested in the erection of a small theatre at the rear of her residence in Dean Street, Soho. A feature of the new house was some unusually elaborate and costly stage machinery, which, however, failed badly at the opening of the house in 1840, and which had to be removed at enormous expense. This was a crippling start and one from which it never really recovered. Nothing daunted, Miss Kelly, now in her fiftieth year, started a second season with her erstwhile successful "Dramatic Recollections" in an attempt to retrieve her losses. But the entertainment had exhausted its public. In this atmosphere of accumulating difficulties, added to the ill-health which resulted from her troubles, she struggled on with her school, and it was a prematurely old, garrulous and eccentric figure whom Dickens found in command when he approached her with a view to presenting his amateur players at her theatre.

In a letter to John Forster, dated July 22nd, 1845, Dickens describes an interview he had had with her which bears comparison with any thumb-nail sketch in the novels:

"Heavens! such a scene as I have had with Miss Kelly here this

morning ! She wanted us put off until the theatre should be cleaned and brushed up a bit, and she would and she would not, for she is eager to have us and alarmed when she thinks of us. By the foot of Pharaoh, it was a great scene ! Especially when she choked, and had the glass of water brought. She exaggerates the importance of our occupation, dreads the least prejudice against her establishment in the minds of any of our company, says the place already has quite ruined her, and with tears in her eyes protests that any jokes at her additional expense in print would drive her mad. By the body of Cæsar, the scene was incredible ! It's like a preposterous dream . . ."

The strange oaths in this letter are, of course, written in the vein of Bobadil, the character he was at the moment rehearsing.

However, on September 20th the amateurs duly made their first appearance in London at "Miss Kelly's Theatre," the programme consisting of Jonson's "Everyman in his Humour," and the variously entitled "A Good Night's Rest." As we have seen in the recent account of these performances in these pages, a public performance at St. James's Theatre followed shortly afterwards, but a return to the Soho house was made on January 3rd, 1846, when Fletcher's "The Elder Brother" and the farce "Comfortable Lodgings," were given for the benefit of the manageress. It had been intended that Miss Kelly should herself appear in her old rôle of Finnikin in "Gretna Green" on this occasion and be supported by members of the amateur company, but doubtless the obstacles created by the "difficult" actress proved insurmountable. In its place she spoke a Prologue specially written by Dickens.*

Dickens, as usual, went to considerable pains to publicise this performance, and wrote to the beneficiary at length, advising her in the matter of preliminary printing, and promising to see that such announcements reached every member of the audience at the St. James's Theatre performance.

These sporadic invasions of her theatre by such distinguished amateurs did not, however, spell prosperity, and two years later we find Miss Kelly seeking the advice of Dickens with reference to a projected series of Shakespearean readings to provincial literary institutes. They failed, however, to afford her any financial relief, and by this time she was in such straits as to be unable to pay the rent of the theatre. Shortly afterwards it passed out of her hands, and the manageress retired, with her daughter, to a small house in Bayswater, where she derived a meagre living from the fees of private pupils.

Her theatre continued its precarious course for some years. Not long after this time a young amateur paid three guineas for the privilege of appearing as Romeo before his first London audience. His name was Henry Irving. Ellen Terry also appeared here when she was very young, not long after she had left Charles Kean at the Princess's. Later it became the Royalty Theatre and housed leading players for many years. It is now scheduled for demolition.

In 1853 Miss Kelly's position was so far from prosperous that a most

* A facsimile of the Manuscript of this was printed in *The Dickensian*, 1939, page 242.

influential committee had been formed for the purpose of organising a benefit performance on her behalf. This was designed to take place at the St. James's Theatre on June 16th of that year and to enlist the services of most of the leading performers of the day. Dickens was not unnaturally found to be the driving force of this committee on which royalty and the peerage were liberally represented. He was also supported on it by John Forster and Mark Lemon. The latter promised to write a play specially for the occasion which would star the heroine of the evening and which, it was hoped, she might later be able to take on tour. But her health and, one suspects, her temperament, presented insuperable difficulties. Dickens, who himself was far from well at the time, apparently found these difficulties to be exceeding reasonable bounds, as a letter he wrote to her clearly demonstrates :

> Dear Miss Kelly,
>
> On the question of your own acting, as you make it a matter of feeling I can say nothing. On the question of now abandoning "Free and Easy" I can only say that if—knowing it to be Charles Mathews's suggestion ; having seen how Harley was gradually got to play a particular part in it ; and having the other day sat by and seen actors and managers written to concerning other particular parts in it—you don't think it unreasonable, nothing I can say could make it appear so.—Faithfully yours always.

Dickens, as this letter shows, had thrown himself into the organisation of the performance with all his accustomed energy. He had personally secured the services of the great French actor, Regnier, who happened then to be in London, but most of his correspondence with Miss Kelly herself was conducted through Mrs. Dickens, even to congratulate her upon the patronage of the Queen when that valuable asset had been secured. But circumstances combined to defeat him and the project had to be abandoned. It was announced that money would be refunded to ticket holders, but many of them declined to accept it. Dickens retained a sum to cover expenses and poor Miss Kelly was enquiring the following year about a possible, but as it proved, a non-existent balance.

After this abortive attempt to provide the one-time popular favourite with a small income, she sank into almost complete obscurity, living with her daughter in a cottage at Feltham, Middlesex. In her last years she attempted to assemble her recollections in yet another attempt to provide herself with sorely-needed funds. Charles Kent was to edit them on the lines of those of Grimaldi, edited by Boz. But alas, the actress who had been instrumental in obtaining great success for the farewell benefits of the older actor, had been unable to obtain the like for herself ; nor was she, unlike him, able to complete the materials for her book. Charles Kent, however, was responsible for the account of her life that appears in the Dictionary of National Biography.

The final tragedy of those last long thirty years at Feltham was the fact that although another generation of distinguished actors and authors had combined in an attempt to relieve her declining years by memorialising the Government on her behalf, she did not receive the

resulting Civil List Pension of £150 until she was ninety-two years of age and within a few short months of her death.

Those months saw her receive the head of her profession, Sir Henry Irving, who waited upon her to offer the congratulations of his colleagues upon the recognition that had, at last, been officially given to her services to dramatic art. He was accompanied by his great friend, John L. Toole, who gives us an interesting account of the interview in his "Recollections."

It was in December, 1882, that she died, and was laid to rest in Brompton Cemetery, a pathetically lonely figure, a survivor, it would seem, of almost legendary times.

"MR. CHARLES DICKENS WILL READ"

BY WALTER DEXTER

V.

LONG before the last reading of the Third Series had concluded in London on 13th May, 1867, Dickens was turning over in his mind the possibility of a successful American tour. Many highly lucrative offers had been received from American Agents, all of which he declined. In the end, Dolby was dispatched to the United States early in August, 1867, to see what prospects there were of a successful tour. He returned at the end of September, and after a fateful conference at the Royal Hotel in Ross-on-Wye, during which Forster opposed the idea in his most forceful manner, a cable was sent to Ticknor and Fields in Boston to say "Yes; go ahead," and Dickens left England on 9th November, having been preceded a month earlier by the capable and faithful Dolby. A full account of all these proceedings is given in Forster's *Life*, as well as in Dolby's most interesting book, "Charles Dickens as I knew Him," to which readers in search of detailed information are referred.

It was estimated that for eighty Readings Dickens would receive a net sum of £15,500. Actually the sum realised, after deducting all preliminary expenses, and every expense of the tour, was over £19,000. Dolby says seventy six readings were given. After the most exhaustive search we are unable to trace more than seventy four; and we desire to place on record our thanks to members of the New York, Boston and Philadelphia branches for checking our list so far as their own cities are concerned, as well as to the Librarians of the Public Libraries of the other cities visited, for their great help in making the list of American Readings, printed on the two following pages, as complete as possible.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP IN WAR TIME. Please see page 131. Secretaries of home branches are requested to send particulars before the end of June.

THE READINGS IN AMERICA

Date.	*Town.*	*Place.*	*Reading.*
1867.			
Monday December 2	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Carol, Trial.*
Tuesday ,, 3	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Copperfield, Bob.*
Thursday ,, 5	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Nickleby, Boots.*
Friday ,, 6	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Dombey, Trial.*
Monday December 9	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Carol, Trial.*
Tuesday ,, 10	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Copperfield, Bob.*
Thursday ,, 12	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Nickleby, Boots.*
Friday ,, 13	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Dombey, Trial.*
Monday December 16	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Carol, Trial.*
Tuesday ,, 17	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Copperfield, Bob.*
Thursday ,, 19	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Nickleby, Boots.*
Friday ,, 20	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Dombey, Trial.*
Monday December 23	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Copperfield, Bob.*
Tuesday ,, 24	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Carol, Trial.*
Thursday ,, 26	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Carol, Trial.*
Friday ,, 27	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Nickleby, Bob.*
Saturday (Matinee) ,, 28	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Copperfield, Boots.*
1868.			
Thursday January 2	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Marigold, Trial.*
Friday ,, 3	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Carol, Boots.*
Monday January 6	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Carol, Trial.*
Tuesday ,, 7	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Nickleby, Bob.*
Thursday ,, 9	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Marigold, Trial.*
Friday ,, 10	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Nickleby, Bob.*
Monday January 13	Philadelphia.	Concert Hall.	*Carol, Trial.*
Tuesday ,, 14	Philadelphia.	Concert Hall.	*Copperfield, Bob.*
Thursday ,, 16	Brooklyn.	Plymouth Church.	*Carol, Trial.*
Friday ,, 17	Brooklyn.	Plymouth Church.	*Copperfield, Bob.*
Monday January 20	Brooklyn.	Plymouth Church.	*Marigold, Trial.*
Tuesday ,, 21	Brooklyn.	Plymouth Church.	*Nickleby, Boots.*
Thursday ,, 23	Philadelphia.	Concert Hall.	*Nickleby, Boots.*
Friday ,, 24	Philadelphia.	Concert Hall.	*Dombey, Trial.*
Monday January 27	Baltimore.	Concordia Opera House.	*Carol, Trial.*
Tuesday ,, 28	Baltimore.	Concordia Opera House.	*Copperfield, Bob.*
Thursday ,, 30	Philadelphia.	Concert Hall.	*Marigold, Bob.*
Friday ,, 31	Philadelphia.	Concert Hall.	*Copperfield, Boots.*
Monday February 3	Washington.	Carroll Hall.	*Carol, Trial.*
Tuesday ,, 4	Washington.	Carroll Hall.	*Copperfield, Bob.*
Thursday ,, 6	Washington.	Carroll Hall.	*Marigold, Trial.*
Friday ,, 7	Washington.	Carroll Hall.	*Nickleby, Boots.*
Monday February 10	Baltimore.	Concordia Opera House.	*Marigold. Trial.*
Tuesday ,, 11	Baltimore.	Concordia Opera House.	*Nickleby, Boots.*
Thursday ,, 13	Philadelphia.	Concert Hall.	*Carol, Boots.*
Friday ,, 14	Philadelphia.	Concert Hall.	*Marigold, Trial.*

Date.		Town.	Place.	Reading.
	1868			
Tuesday	February 18	Hartford.	Allyn Hall.	*Carol. Trial.*
Thursday	,, 20	Providence.	City Hall.	*Carol. Trial.*
Friday	,, 21	Providence.	City Hall.	*Marigold. Bob.*
Monday	February 24	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Marigold. Trial.*
Tuesday	,, 25	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Copperfield. Bob.*
Thursday	,, 27	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Carol, Boots.*
Friday	,, 28	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Nickleby. Trial.*
Monday	March 9	Syracuse.	Wieting Hall.	*Carol. Trial.*
Tuesday	,, 10	Rochester.	Corinthian Hall.	*Carol, Trial.*
Thursday	,, 12	Buffalo.	St. James's Hall.	*Carol. Trial.*
Friday	,, 13	Buffalo.	St. James's Hall.	*Marigold. Bob.*
Monday	March 16	Rochester.	Corinthian Hall.	*Marigold. Bob.*
Wednesday	,, 18	Albany.	Twiddle Hall.	*Carol, Trial.*
Thursday	,, 19	Albany.	Twiddle Hall.	*Marigold. Bob.*
Friday	,, 20	Springfield.	Music Hall.	*Carol. Trial.*
Monday	March 23	Worcester.	Mechanics' Hall.	*Carol, Trial*
Tuesday	,, 24	New Haven.	Music Hall.	*Marigold, Bob*
Wednesday	,, 25	Hartford.	Allyn Hall.	*Marigold, Bob*
Friday	,, 27	New Bedford.	Liberty Hall.	*Carol. Trial*
Monday	March 30	Portland.	City Hall.	*Carol. Trial.*
Wednesday	April 1	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Carol. Trial.*
Thursday	,, 2	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Nickleby, Boots.*
Friday	,, 3	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Marigold. Gamp.*
Monday	April 6	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Copperfield. Bob.*
Tuesday	,, 7	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Dombey, Trial.*
Wednesday	,, 8	Boston.	Tremont Temple.	*Marigold. Gamp.*
Monday	April 13	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Marigold. Gamp.*
Tuesday	,, 14	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Nickleby. Boots.*
Thursday	,, 16	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Copperfield. Bob.*
Friday	,, 17	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Marigold. Gamp.*
Monday	April 20	New York.	Steinway Hall.	*Carol. Trial.*

PHILADELPHIA'S RECORD OFFICIALS RECOGNISED

THERE was a very pleasant ceremony in January last when Mrs. Arthur Goldsmith, in a charming and gracious manner presented tokens of appreciation and remembrance to Mr. J. K. Thompson and Mr. William I. Rutter, former Secretary and Treasurer. These gentlemen, in their respective capacities have served the Philadelphia Branch since its inception thirty-five years ago, and have only recently retired from these posts after an unbroken record of loyal, faithful, efficient service, and in the name of the Fellowship, Mr. Rutter received a copy of a privately printed edition of *The Strange Gentleman*, and Mr. Thompson a beautifully bound volume of "Letters of Dickens to Mark Lemon." Both gentlemen responded and received an ovation.

MORE LETTERS TO THE WATSONS

By FRANKLIN P. ROLFE

(*continued from page* 123)

Broadstairs, Kent.
Twenty Ninth July 1851

My Dear Mrs Watson.

I am quite delighted to think that you are coming to the Play, before it gets any older. You will find the first three acts of the comedy rather heavy, I am afraid, but it picks up afterwards. I have always a vicious desire to electrify Mr Forster (when he is acting) violently, in some sensitive part of his anatomy. I shall be interested in knowing whether you are afflicted with the same cruel aspiration.

There are no Boxes, properly so called; because, as they are very large and would be very expensive, we number the chairs in them as seats. Do you know the Room? There is a certain Royal box, at the end opposite the stage, in the very centre, greatly raised. I have reserved you two seats in the front row there. I have also reserved you two seats on the ground, next to the stage—that is to say, where the stage rises immediately before you, with the orchestra interposed, as in the front row of Stalls at a Theatre. You can choose between these; and let me know (here) which you prefer. Or, if you like to ask for me at the Rooms, during the Rehearsal-time on Monday (between 12 and ½ past 2) I will shew you the actual places and you shall decide then. I think, myself, the front of the Royal box on the whole the better place; but it is at the end of the room, and you might like to be nearer. If you like to be close, the other is the better situation.

I am indeed rejoiced to hear of Haldimand.

I write in haste to save the post, after a hard day's work.

With love to Watson

Ever Dear Mrs Watson

Faithfully Yours

C.D.

Guild performances continued through 1851 and on into September 1852. In October 1851 Dickens moved into Tavistock House. In July, 1852, Mr. Watson was elected one of the Members of Parliament for Peterborough.

Office of Household Words.
No. 16, Wellington Street North—Strand.
Friday Thirty First October 1851.

My Dear Watson,

I am most unwilling to decline an invitation so originated and so seconded as that which you have sent me. But I fear I have no possible alternative. Besides being hard at work, I am at present in such convulsions of repairing and moving, that it takes thirty (of Cubitt's) men to hold me. I am perfectly wild to get into my new study (having a new book on my mind); and all the Trades of the civilised earth seem to be whistling in it, and intending to grow grey

in it. In addition to these trifles, and the ordinary demands upon my attention made here, I have the Guild army to drill and put in motion for three nights at Bath and Bristol in the week after next. Besides all this, I am asked to attend Soirées of Mechanics' Institutions (of which as you know I am a warm advocate) continually, and have, for many months past, excused myself on the ground of my many engagements. Hence, if I could even make an exception in this case (which I really do not see the possibility of doing, with the slightest reference to what I have around me and before me) I should get into no end of contradictions and inconsistencies, and a hail of additional correspondence would pour down on my devoted head immediately.

I hope you may be able to read this, but I can't see it as I write it for a tremendous cold, which has shut up my right eye—made a mere steel button of my left—communicated the lively expression of a codfish to my mouth—muffled my voice—rasped the inside of my chest with a rough file—and reduced my mental condition (as you may perceive) to one of mere drivel and imbecility*

. . . . . .

(Each of the foregoing marks represents a sneeze which seized me at this point.) Pray make my best remembrances to Mrs Watson, and tell her that it seems so strange to me not to be coming to see you at about this time of year! Georgina and the children are still at Broadstairs, until we shall have prepared a pigeon-hole or two into which they may creep. Catherine is here with me and sends her kind love. She is all over paint, and seems to think that it is somehow being immensely useful to get into that condition. We sit in our new house all day, trying to touch the hearts of the workmen by our melancholy looks, and are patched with oil and lime and haggard with white lead. We sit upon a ladder. All the doors are always open; and there is no repose or privacy, as Irish labourers stare in through the very slates.

Ever Faithfully Yours
Charles Dickens

Tavistock House
Monday Night
Twenty Second March 1852

My Dear Mrs Watson,

If you are in a state of sparebedativeness and repose at Rockingham, and will allow me to bring with me my confidential sub Editor &c &c and our Guild Honorary Secretary, all summed up in the person of Mr Wills, who is a very intelligent gentleman (though I could wish him not quite so thin and sharp-nosed) I shall be on my way to Birmingham and one or two other places with my aforesaid Trusty, next week, and propose to myself the undermentioned pleasure:

Namely—to bring Charley to Rockingham on Wednesday Week—to come down by a fast morning train (I have visions of vague Expresses at 9 or 10) so that we may have a day there—to stay with you that night, and go on to Birmingham next morning. If you should have any kind of engagements or visitors that stand in the way, I believe you will tell me so, and therefore I don't hesitate to "propose" (as a friend of ours might say) in this business-like manner.

* Here follow four horizontal lines of varying squiggley designs.—Editor.

Talking of which friend, I can't help adding that I was so delighted with him the other day ! I do think that noble freshness and enthusiasm that can confidently afford to be itself and shew itself, is one of the finest qualities (including no end of others) in the world ! The manner in which my uncountable children disappeared when he talked to me, and I stood again upon the enchanted Island of those brilliant old proposals of my own (accepted in the most fervent manner, and never coming to anything) which graced the thousands of years (as they seem to me now) when I was yet an infant in the eye of the law—is a proof to me, in itself, of the goodness of such a character.

I have been writing all day, and, if I were to write more here, should go on for I can't foresee how many pages. I had better go out instead, and have a long walk—for both our sakes.

My loving remembrances to the Member for Peterboro'. I think I shall make you and him laugh by telling you about a little dinner I had with Brougham at Rogers's last Friday, which for a spectral and ghastly Boredom surpasses all my experience.

Ever Dear Mrs Watson
Most Faithfully Yours
Charles Dickens

Tavistock House
Thursday Sixth May 1852

My Dear Mrs Watson,

I am quite delighted that you are going to Birmingham. If you had left a blank in your places, I should have been quite a dispirited comedian. Will you let me know—when you know—whether Mary Boyle and Mrs Cavendish use two places ? Because, if we should have any to spare (not probable I hope) out of our small reserved number, sundry Mayors and other eminent personages are waiting for them.

Mr Wills will be at Birmingham on Saturday, on his way to Shrewsbury. He will then see to our hotel accommodation and to yours. From what I remember of the Birmingham hotels, I fear you would not get good rooms in any house lodging our very large party. But if they are to be got in the same house, he will get them. If not, he will make comfort his main consideration, and take them elsewhere. He will arrange for them to be ready for you on the Wednesday morning, and will write you a line before he leaves Birmingham telling you what he has done, and the name of the Hotel. I have also begged him to look up some of the most interesting " Works " for Thursday morning.

Mr Boythorn is (between ourselves) a most exact portrait of Walter Savage Landor. Five and thirty thousand every publishing day, is the present mark of Bleak House, thank God !

I had a most extraordinary dream about Watson last night, who I thought had gone mad, and was perpetually pursuing me, with a Revolver. I suffered the greatest agonies of mind, both on his account and my own.

With my love, and much anticipation of the pleasure of meeting you both,

Ever Dear Mrs Watson Most Faithfully Yrs
Charles Dickens

Tavistock House
Wednesday Evening, Seventh July
1852

My Dear Watson

I have just come home from Folkestone, and am truly concerned to find your note here. The subject was so far from escaping my recollection that, several times lately, I have had it in my mind to ask you whether you recollected my volunteering and whether you would like me to come. But I settled within myself, as you said nothing about it, that there might easily exist some little local reasons or arrangements that rendered it undesirable. I am now more vexed than I can tell you, to find that you would have liked me to be there, for I can most honestly and heartily say that no one in the world could feel a livelier interest in your success than I, as no one can feel more sincerely attached to you. And whether I ought to knock my own head against the chimney piece for not having been at the Nomination, or whether I ought (in the spirit) to give yours a gentle tap against the same object for being so horribly considerate as not to ask me before, I am not clear. I really take it to heart that I did not know of this sooner, and have had more than half a mind to quarrel with Catherine or Georgina as if they were to blame !

I hope that you are safely in, and that a new MP of the right sort will dine with me on Sunday. The conduct of the Derby people about Maynooth is worthy of them and I don't know how one could better express political baseness of the worst kind.

If I were to tell you half of my annoyance at not having been with you today, you would think the heat had made me fretful. But I am quite sore about it, and I think it must be your fault !

Ever Affectionately Yours
Charles Dickens

The Honourable Richard Watson.

Mr. Watson died suddenly on July 24th, 1852. Dickens continued his interesting correspondence with Mrs. Watson, but saw her less frequently thereafter. The Christmas number for 1854 referred to in the next letter was *The Seven Poor Travellers*. The two papers on Dr. Rae's report were entitled *The Lost Arctic Voyagers* ("Household Words," December 2nd and 9th, 1854, pp. 361-5, 385-93).

Tavistock House
Friday First December 1854

My Dear Mrs Watson

I am sorry to say that I am afraid of making an engagement for this day week. I come to the conclusion with great reluctance ; but, on the next day the Christmas Number of Household Words must be upon the Steam Engine, printing ; and I have been so much disappointed in the nature of the Contributions as yet received, that it will require my utmost care and assistance. I think I am certain to be occupied on the Friday, all day. And sorely against my will, I must reserve myself for this piece of work.

I have been prevented by the same cause from coming to Brighton, which I confidently expected to have done. To mend the

matter, I took it into my head to be violently interested in writing two papers on Dr. Rae's report concerning Franklin ; wherein you will see strung together some of the most extraordinary cases of shipwreck I know. This has helped to drive me up into the corner in which I at present stand at bay—with this Christmas Bull trying to toss me.

I hope Oriental Place has conducted itself with a gorgeousness worthy of its name ? The last time I stayed at Brighton I was brayed and brassily blasted into imbecility of mind, by German bands.

Kate and Georgina send their kindest loves.

Dear Mrs Watson

Ever Most Faithfully Yours

Charles Dickens

Dickens read the *Carol* for the benefit of the Mechanics' Institute at Peterborough on December 22nd, 1855. In November he began the publication of *Little Dorrit*, which he had intended to call " Nobody's Fault." Mr. Brown was the husband of Miss Coutts's companion and friend, *née* Hannah Meredith.

Tavistock House

Monday May Twenty First, 1855

My Dear Mrs Watson

I was more vexed on Saturday than I can tell you. But the fault was not mine. On my infallible slate of engagements, was this inscription :

Mrs Watson here at 3.

And on the unerring tablet of my remembrance was this quotation from Mrs Watson's lips :

I am always punctual—3.

Consequently, when I came home (having only run down to the office) at ten minutes before three, conscious rectitude sustained me under your having come and gone. In which proceeding you have no kind of justification. Take my blessing and forgiveness !

They told me what you were saying about Peterborough ; on which subject I have a suggestion to make. In case you should find that Lord Fitzwilliam has company, don't you think you could be quietly comfortable at the Hotel with Mr Wills and me ? I would then so arrange as to come to Rockingham early on the morning of the day before the Reading, and take you on, the same day, to Peterboro'. Mr Wills (who is my commissariat and transport service on such occasions), would be already there, and would have seen everything prepared for you. It is clear that you must come to the Reading, because I intend to read to you only. And it would be an extraordinary pleasure to me to have such an opportunity of passing a few hours with you, if it could be achieved. I have no doubt I shall be in a hurry, whatever I may propose or plan now ; for I shall have come from Paris, and shall be going to Sheffield, and thence to Birmingham, and thence to Paris again, at a hand-gallop. But such a plan as this, could not be in the least affected by my fitful proceedings.

I am in the first chapter of a new, long, twenty-number Green book (publication to begin in November), and am in a state of

restlessness not to be described or imagined—walking about the country by day—prowling about into the strangest places in London by night—sitting down to do an immensity—getting up after doing nothing—walking about my room on particular bits of all the flowers in the carpet—tearing my hair (which I can't afford to do)—and on the whole astonished at my own condition, though I am used to it. In greater hands than mens', such states of mind have been moulded, and will have their due allowance some day. Yet I say to myself sometimes when I am a little impatient, "How can you be such an erratic, wayward, unsettled, capricious, incomprehensible Beast? I am ashamed of you!"

My Dear Mrs Watson
Ever Most Faithfully Yours
Charles Dickens

Paris, 49 Avenue des Champs Elysèes.
Saturday November Tenth 1855

My Dear Mrs Watson,

You will have seen before now, I dare say, that I have changed the title of my book, and adopted one which has a pleasanter sound in my ears, and which is equally applicable to the same story.

Miss Coutts has been here in great distress, occasioned by the death of Mr Brown at Montpellier. There being all kinds of little obstacles in the way of what she wanted done as to his burial, which the people to whom she entrusted their adjustment conglomerated every hour, I went off to London to set them right for her—have remained there ten days—and returned here only last night.

Now as to Peterboro'. If I can possibly contrive to come to dear old Rockingham on the Monday night, I shall of course do so, and I shall make all conceivable endeavours to do so. But I have been sadly thrown back by this jaunt for Miss Coutts, and must go to work diligently. Time may be so precious to me at that time of the month, that I may be able only to leave here upon the Monday. In that case, I must meet you, either on the Railway or at Peterboro'. I do not know which is the good hotel. Will you let me hear from you by the end of this month (here, of course) telling me which is the good hotel, and whether the two young Etonians are coming with you. Mr Wills will then make all arrangements as to rooms, and you need do nothing whatever.

You will have read (I hope) the first No of my story, when I have the great delight of seeing you. As the second is the great start of my Little Dorrit herself, I shall bring it in my pocket, in order that you may anticipate the public, in making acquaintance with that young person.

Mrs Dickens and Georgina send their kindest and best love. We are established in rooms rather larger than meat-safes. But there are plenty of them, and they are pretty and snug, and in the liveliest situation in Paris—just about mid-way between the Barrière de l'Etoile, and the Place de la Concorde.

Looking forward to next month,

Ever My Dear Mrs Watson
Affectionately your friend
Charles Dickens

(To be concluded)

THE DICKENS DIETARY

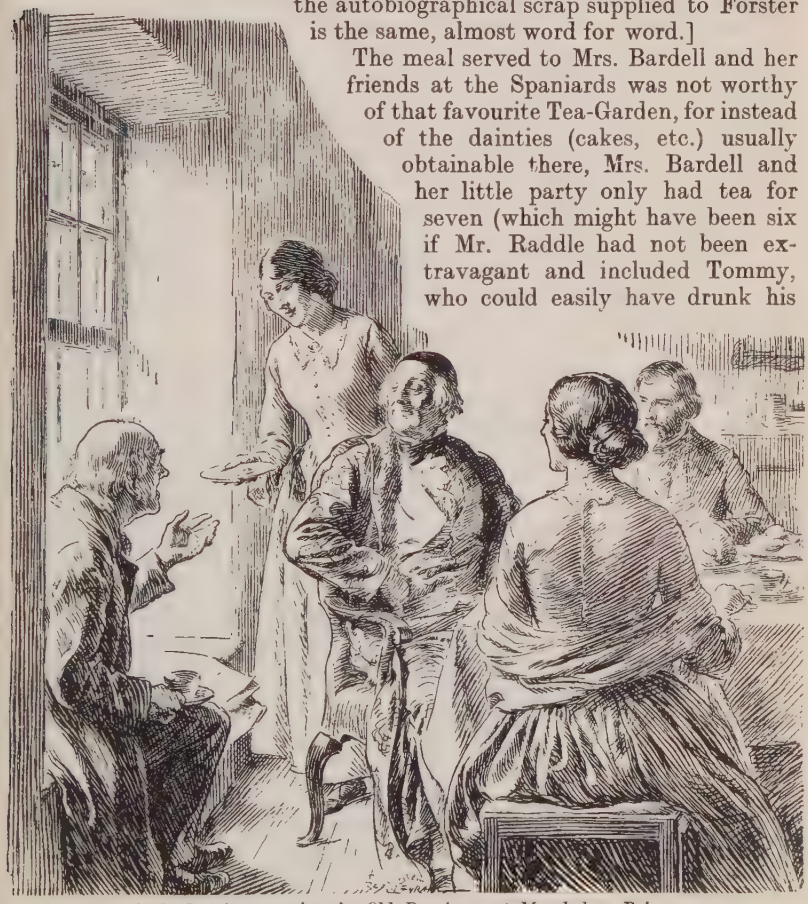
By T. W. HILL

IV—TEAS

(*Continued from page* 101)

Trotty Veck once said : " There's nothing more regular in its coming round than dinner-time, and nothing less regular in its coming round than dinner." Little David Copperfield might have said the same about tea-time and tea as the poor little chap could not always afford his half-a-pint of ready-made coffee and slice of bread-and-butter, and then he used up his half-hour by going to look at the venison in a shop in Fleet Street or to stare at the pineapples in Covent Garden market. [The account of Dickens's own experience of this tea interval given in the autobiographical scrap supplied to Forster is the same, almost word for word.]

The meal served to Mrs. Bardell and her friends at the Spaniards was not worthy of that favourite Tea-Garden, for instead of the dainties (cakes, etc.) usually obtainable there, Mrs. Bardell and her little party only had tea for seven (which might have been six if Mr. Raddle had not been extravagant and included Tommy, who could easily have drunk his



Little Dorrit entertains the Old Pensioner at Marshalsea Prison.

out of anybody's saucer or everybody's if that was all), and bread and butter.

Tea purely as a drink or refreshment at any time of day is exemplified in Mr. Venus, whose general lowness of spirits may have been due to the fact that he consumed enormous quantities of it. When Wegg and he were discussing the important paper that was to bring about the downfall of the Golden Dustman, Venus brewed tea, and throughout the interview had three successive cups, using the saucer (after blowing it). Wegg called it "floating your powerful mind in tea" and Venus went on swilling and punctuating his conversation with gulps.

A similar glimpse we are afforded at Bath on the Gala Night when Dowler, who introduced Pickwick, says: "Stop in the tea-room. Take your sixpenn'orth. They lay on hot water and call it tea," which remains as true of the liquid provided at most modern "crushes" as it was of the "crush" at the Assembly Rooms. And no one with the least acquaintance with the names of Tony Weller and Sam is likely to want to be reminded of the meeting of the Brick Lane Branch of the United Grand Junction Ebenezer Temperance Association, the business at which began with the consumption of tea sold to the members by an enthusiastic and disinterested chandler's-shop-keeper. The tea disappeared at a most alarming rate, and Tony thought "some o' these 'ere people will want tappin' tomorrow mornin'," and one old lady was "a-drowndin' herself in tea" and a young 'ooman "had drunk nine breakfast cups and a half and wos a-swellin' wisibly." It may be guessed that the quality of the beverage at such a gathering was much better than that supplied to Mr. Pickwick at Bath, even if one of the members did make a profit out of it.

A quiet tea without tea was the beautifully described feast of the three Hobgoblins, consisting of a small cottage loaf and a pennyworth of milk laid out on a sheet of paper in the window-seat of Rumpty Wilfer's office in Mincing Lane after office hours, supplemented by a second little loaf and another supply of milk on a second piece of paper when Bella joined him, and on the arrival of the third hobgoblin in the person of John Rokesmith, a third little cottage loaf and a third drink of milk made a gorgeous repast, although Bella had left all the Boffin dust and gold behind her and John was out of work. The dreary city office, representing the house in the forest in the fairy tale, had never been shut up by three happier people, although on arrival home at Holloway, Rumpty and his boofer lady were received by Mrs. Wilfer looking like a frozen article on sale in a Russian market.

Mr. William Dorrit spent twenty-five years of his life in the Marshalsea, and by accepting small gifts, sometimes in kind, generally managed to get something nice on the table at meal-times. His age and his position of Father of the Marshalsea ensured him a certain deference and gave him a kind of royal and courtly grace, much enhanced by the aggressive conceit of Fanny and Tip, that are admirably exhibited in his treatment of Mr. Nandy, the inmate of a Workhouse, who sometimes visits him, whom he holds in a kind of

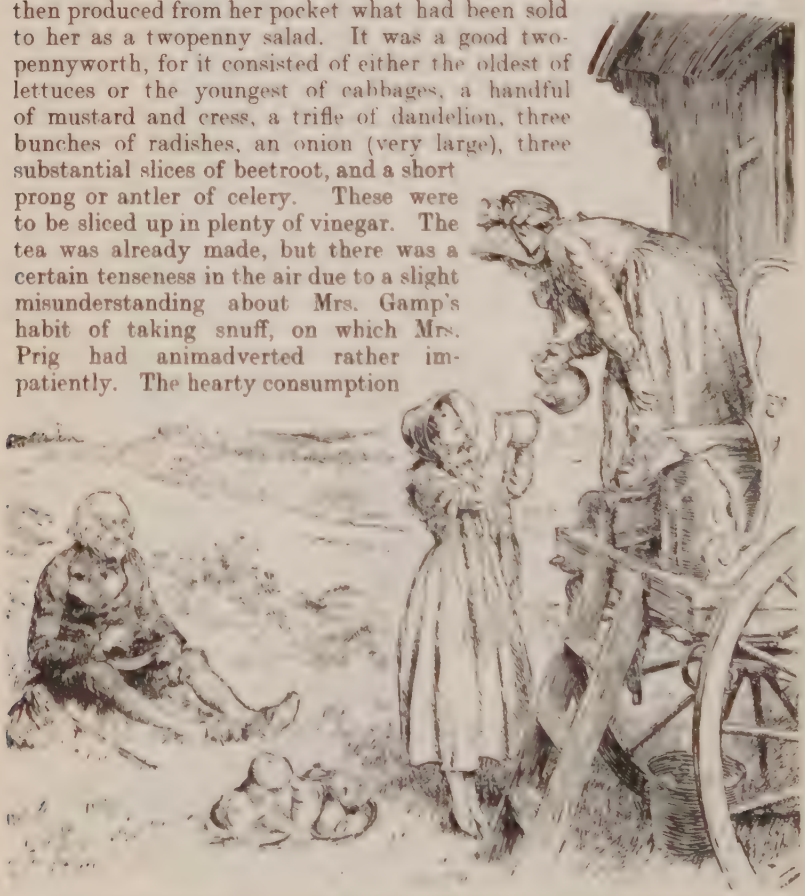
vassallage under a sort of feudal tenure—entirely fictitious and of his own imagining. Even when speaking of him, Mr. Dorrit habitually referred to him as "an old pensioner of mine" on the strength of giving him a few coppers to buy tobacco, although Mr. Nandy was free to go out on occasion while Mr. Dorrit himself was confined in a debtors' prison and free to go out never. On Mr. Nandy's birthday he came to the Marshalsea to tea, and Mr. Dorrit introduced him to a fellow Collegian in the usual way: "An old acquaintance of mine; an old pensioner. Be covered, my good Nandy: put your hat on." An attractive meal was provided of tea-cakes, fresh butter, eggs, cold ham, and shrimps. Caste is strictly observed, and a newspaper is spread on the window-sill for Mr. Nandy, while Mr. Dorrit, his two daughters and Arthur Clennam sit round the table waited upon by Maggy, whilst, throughout the progress of tea, Mr. Dorrit exhibits regal magnanimity by constantly referring in asides to Nandy's failing hearing, diminishing mental condition, and weakening legs, etc. He finally dismisses him with "You must not come out without seeing us or we shall be jealous," quite in the imperial manner.

Later in the same story it becomes Arthur Clennam's fate to be incarcerated in the same prison, and, through John Chivery's kind thought, to occupy Mr. Dorrit's apartments into which he has put his own furniture. He then invites Clennam to take some tea in his own apartment and to tempt the appetite of a very down-

Sarah Gamp and Betsey Prig preparing for the fray.—"Martin Chuzzlewit."

hearted man he provides fresh butter in a cabbage leaf, some thin slices of boiled ham in another cabbage leaf and a little basket of water-cresses and salad herbs. This is one of the most discerning character-studies that Dickens ever wrote and it would be sacrilege to dare to summarize such a masterly chapter, displaying the respective attitudes of Young John and Arthur Clennam, rivals for Little Dorrit; one of them hopeless in his suit for lack of reciprocated affection, and the other without hope owing to his circumstances.

I have reserved to the last the most famous of all the tea-parties—that of Mrs. Gamp and Mrs. Prig. Mrs. Gamp asserted to herself aloud that she was "dropping" for want of her tea when Betsey arrived laden with provisions to be added to the delicate new loaf, the plate of fresh butter and the two pounds of Newcastle salmon intensely pickled that Sairey had already on the table. On seeing the salmon Mrs. Prig exclaimed "I know'd she wouldn't have a cowcumber," and then produced from her pocket what had been sold to her as a twopenny salad. It was a good two-pennyworth, for it consisted of either the oldest of lettuces or the youngest of cabbages, a handful of mustard and cress, a trifle of dandelion, three bunches of radishes, an onion (very large), three substantial slices of beetroot, and a short prong or antler of celery. These were to be sliced up in plenty of vinegar. The tea was already made, but there was a certain tenseness in the air due to a slight misunderstanding about Mrs. Gamp's habit of taking snuff, on which Mrs. Prig had animadverted rather impatiently. The hearty consumption



Mrs. Jarley entertains little Nell and her Grandfather to tea.—"Old Curiosity Shop."

of food kept matters quiet during the meal, but when the table was cleared wine glasses and another teapot from the top shelf were set out, what was probably a surfeit of highly pickled salmon and lettuces chopped up in vinegar produced an exacerbation of Mrs. Prig's natural acidity of temper, and this got worse with each application to the teapot, the fragrance of which was strong in the room, and her countenance became derisive and defiant, to which was added, for effect, the shutting of one eye in a somewhat offensive because obtrusively intelligent manner. The immediate cause of quarrel was Betsey's openly expressed disbelief in the existence of Mrs. Harris. Whether there was any foundation for this disbelief is still a profound mystery, and the matter has never been satisfactorily cleared up. The chapter in which this world-famous quarrel is described is headed: "In which Mrs. Harris, assisted by a teapot, is the cause of a division between friends," which looks as if Dickens thought there might be sich a person.

Three tea-parties not mentioned above, namely, Mrs. Jarley's kindly reception of Little Nell and her Grandfather, tea in the Smallweed family, and Trotty Veck's hospitality to Will Fern and Lilian, have already been dealt with in a previous article, and all that is necessary now is to add that it is hoped that sufficient material has been given in this article to justify the inclusion of Tea as a meal in the Dickens Dietary.

CLUES FOR UNMADE DICKENS CROSSWORDS

BY WALTER THOMAS

ACROSS

1. All that was to be found behind the lumps of the young gentleman with the lumpy forehead (5).
2. "As nonsensical a thing as any going" (3).
3. Dame Durden's deadly dull darling (3).
4. A frequent expletive in the — hum — speech of a — hum — father.
5. "Rich—fine fellow—not so rich as Captain though" (9).
6. Father of Florence, Susan and another little stranger (5).
7. When found, make a note of this place; he lived there (4).
8. Not the deputy shepherd's favourite beverage (3).
9. A kind-hearted landlady was rebuked for calling her a very young "lady" (6).
10. He struck four of his wife's teeth out at one blow (4).
11. He wore the aspect of a man who was always lying in wait for something that *wouldn't* come to pass (8).
12. Multiply this by 2, carry the product, and you will become "a second Robinson Crusoe" (3).
13. His clerks agreed that he was "a capital man of business" (4).
14. According to friend George, "he has never hurt anybody but himself" (5).

DOWN.

15. Owned to four feet, not in his stockings (2).
16. Field rank when on duty (9).
17. He acted—dismally (5).
18. This widow lady regarded tea and sugar in the light of myrrh and frankincense (9).
19. In the wine trade, but not above soliciting the opinion of a cutler (7).
20. Mr. Muntle's favourite expression (6).
21. She was christened Euphemia and owned a pocket establishment (7).
22. Not a large cigar (9).
23. Otherwise Pip's pepper (7).
24. Two of 'em; bold and brazen (5).
25. He didn't kick it, but his prisoner did (6).
26. Of the Bath Walk (6).
27. Not a queer fish, but to be made a note of nevertheless (6).
28. Rid of in *Great Expectations* (5).
29. Forbidding, with or without it (7).
30. Moses is usually put after it, not before (4).
31. A hunter of quadrupeds (5).
32. The flower of innkeepers (5).
33. "Search Simon" for this maid (11).
34. A friend of Handel (6).
35. Short for short (5).
36. Ole man river (5).
37. Rumty to his colleagues (6).
38. Pip was brought up by it (4).
39. Father of Todgers's (7).
40. The very heart of the fog (3, 3).

(Solutions will be found on the inside front cover.)

AMERICA 1842

A DICKENS DIARY ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

PART III.

MONDAY, APRIL 25TH, 1842.

People poured on board before six o'clock this morning. Journey resumed at nine. Lake Erie won't do for people who are liable to sea-sickness; we were all sick; almost as bad as the Atlantic. The waves are very short and horribly constant. Expect reach Buffalo early to-morrow morning.

TUESDAY, APRIL 26TH, 1842.

Arrived Buffalo six; went ashore to breakfast, and to our unspeakable delight received our English letters. Their reading over, set off at nine o'clock to Niagara, two hours by rail-road. I had been told not to be disappointed in anticipation of the grandeur of the scene; but in the ferry-boat gazing at that awe-inspiring scene, I could but say, "Great God. How can any man be disappointed at this."

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27TH, 1842.

Excellently lodged at the Clifton House Hotel, upon the *English* side. From both sitting-room and bedroom we look down straight upon the Falls. There is no company here to my great delight and we have the Falls to ourselves.

FRIDAY, APRIL 29TH, 1842.

Spent the day writing many letters. Copyright papers to Felton for publication at his discretion; qy. simultaneously in several papers.

SATURDAY, APRIL 30TH, 1842.

Have had a blessed interval of quiet in this beautiful place. Wrote to Mitchell at New York about a good comical flaxen wig to wear at the Montreal performance.

SUNDAY, MAY 1ST, 1842.

Another day of long letter writing; Beard, Austin; but like all other letters from here, must carry them to Montreal for the mail. Anne never looks at anything, or displays the slightest emotion at any sight whatever; she thinks Niagara "nothing but water" and too much of it at that. Thinking over the plays to do at Montreal.

MONDAY, MAY 2ND, 1842.

The national love of doing a man in any bargain, and the national vanity, will be the two obstacles to the passing of an International Copyright Law with England. "Our people don't think of poetry, sir. Dollars, banks, and cotton are our books, sir."

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4TH, 1842.

Left by steamboat in the morning for Lake Ontario, an inland sea. Arrived Toronto at half past six: the town is full of life, bustle and

business. Well paved streets lighted with gas. Houses good; shops excellent; some would do no discredit to the Metropolis.

THURSDAY, MAY 5TH, 1842.

Dine with the Chief Justice. Large party in evening.

FRIDAY, MAY 6TH, 1842.

Steamboat, *City of Toronto*, for Kingston, at noon; called at Port Hope and Coburg, a thriving little town. Flour is the chief item of freight. One thousand and eighty barrels on board at Coburg.

SATURDAY, MAY 7TH, 1842.

Comfortably housed at Daley's British American Hotel. For the seat of government in Canada Kingston is a very poor town; one half burnt down and the other half not built up.

SUNDAY, MAY 8TH, 1842.

Dine with Sir Charles Bagot. English kindness very different from American. People send their horses and carriages for your use, but they don't exact as payment the right of always being under your nose. We have had no less than five carriages waiting our pleasure at one time; not to mention the commodore's barge and crew, and a beautiful government steamer.

MONDAY, MAY 9TH, 1842.

An admirable jail here, well and wisely governed and excellently regulated in all respects; men engaged in all employments building a new prison. Women engaged in needlework; among them beautiful girl of twenty, been there nearly three years; she acted as bearer of secret despatches during the Insurrection; often disguised as a boy; she could govern any horse that any man could ride; naturally a lurking devil in her eye.

TUESDAY, MAY 10TH, 1842.

Left by steamboat at half-past nine in the morning for Montreal; down the noble St. Lawrence river; the beauty of the Thousand Islands can hardly be imagined; all so green and richly wooded; fluctuating sizes and infinite variety of shapes; left steamboat at Dickenson's Landing for 3 hours by stage coach, as the navigation of the river is dangerous owing to rapids; wide uninclosed country; night raw and dark and way dreary; boarded other steamboat at ten o'clock, and to bed.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11TH, 1842.

We lay at wharf all night; started at daybreak. Thunderstorm to begin with; cleared later. Saw floating down the stream a most gigantic raft with thirty or forty wooden houses upon it, and at least the same number of flag-masts, so that it looked like a nautical street. All timber called "lumber" here, brought down in this manner. Landed at eight o'clock; four hours on stage-coach through pleasant well cultivated country, perfectly French in every respect; air, dress, language, Virgin's shrines. Joined another steamboat at noon; reached Lachine, nine miles from Montreal, at three. Lord Mulgrave was to

have met us ; but being windbound in his yacht, could not get in ; Sir Richard Jackson sent his drag four-in-hand and we came in grand style.

THURSDAY, MAY 12TH, 1842.

Rasco's Hotel. Streets narrow and irregular, as in most French towns ; much wider and more airy in the modern parts ; very good shops ; excellent dwellings both in town and suburbs.

SATURDAY, MAY 14TH, 1842.

Montreal is pleasantly backed by some bold heights, with pleasant walks and drives. Granite quays remarkable for beauty, solidity and extent. Large Catholic Cathedral ; one spire still unfinished. Government House superior to that at Kingston.

SUNDAY, MAY 15TH, 1842.

The bursting out of spring is so rapid here that it is but a day's leap from the barren winter to the blooming youth of summer.

SATURDAY, MAY 21ST, 1842.

Busy every day from noon to three with the plays for Wednesday evening ; stage manager and universal director, urging impracticable ladies and impossible gentlemen to the very confines of insanity ; struggling in a vortex of noise, dirt, bustle, confusion, and inextricable entanglement of speech and action. Oh, how I look forward across that rolling water to Home.

MONDAY, MAY 23RD, 1842.

Rasco's Hotel where we are staying is the worst in the whole wide world. I am not placarded as stage manager for nothing ; everybody was told they would have to submit to the most iron despotism ; and didn't I come Macready over them ? Oh, no ; by no means ; certainly not ! ! ! The perspiration I have expended during the last ten days exceeds in amount anything imaginable ; everything is now becoming a perfect touch-and-go. Kate plays devilish well.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25TH, 1842.

The curtain was down promptly at eleven ; audience of over five hundred invited as to a party ; refreshments spread in the lobby and saloon. The plays " went " splendidly. It was worthy of Crummles that when Mulgrave and I went out to the door to receive the Governor-General, the regular prompter followed us in agony with four tall candlesticks begging us to carry two apiece, in accordance with all the precedents.

THURSDAY, MAY 26TH, 1842.

I was so well made up yesterday as Snobbington that Sir Charles Bagot who sat in the stage box had no idea who played the part until the piece was over ; the names of the actors did not appear on the playbills.

FRIDAY, MAY 27TH, 1842.

Left Montreal last evening at six with Mulgrave by steamboat (*Lady*

Colborne) for Quebec, where arrived at six this morning. Breakfast with Dr. Fisher ; lunched with officers of the Grenadier Guards at the Citadel. This Gibraltar of America is unique ; impression of its giddy heights, its citadel suspended, as it were, in the air, its picturesque steep streets, its splendid views everywhere, is lasting. A place not to be forgotten or mixed up with other places ; memories of Wolfe, the Plains of Abraham, and the fortress defended by Montcalm. A noble monument perpetuates the memory of both brave generals.

SATURDAY, MAY 28TH, 1842.

Play again, for the benefit of the manager this time. Of course, substituting real actresses for the ladies.

The steamboat in which we returned to Montreal last night from Quebec was full of emigrants—mostly from Gloucestershire. Wonderful to see how clean the children had been kept ; and how untiring the love and self-denial of the poor parents.

MONDAY, MAY 30TH, 1842.

Leave for New York ; steamboat to La Prairie on opposite bank of St. Lawrence ; thence railroad to St. John's on brink of Lake Champlain. Here the officers of the Barracks entertained us hospitably—and sent us off with Rule Britannia sounding in our ears. Steamboat to Whitehall far superior to any we have yet met ; its name the *Burlington* ; an exquisite achievement of neatness, elegance, and order ; its decks are drawing rooms ; its cabins, boudoirs. Captain Sherman, commander, universally respected. We lay at Burlington an hour.

TUESDAY, MAY 31ST, 1842.

Breakfasted at Whitehall. Stage-coach to Albany—large and busy town reached at between five and six in afternoon. A hot day's journey, for now in summer again. At seven started for New York in crowded North River steamboat ; upper deck like box lobby of theatre between the pieces and the lower one like Tottenham Court Road on a Saturday night. Slept well notwithstanding.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1ST, 1842.

Arrived New York shortly after five this morning.

THURSDAY, JUNE 2ND, 1842.

Our last journey in America—to the Shaker Village. Up the North River again to Hudson ; then by conveyance to Lebanon thirty miles distant ; of course not the Lebanon of the prairie. Rich and beautiful country, with the Kaatskill mountains, where Rip Van Winkle played at ninepins, in the blue distance. Arrived Lebanon between nine and ten at night ; slept in a little white-washed cell--bare of even a chair ; nevertheless bountifully bitten all night.

FRIDAY, JUNE 3RD, 1842.

Drawing room and dining room here as immense as the bedrooms are small. The town is noted for its warm baths ; which need be, as the washing arrangements in the hotel are on as limited a scale as I ever saw, even in America. Shaker Village is two miles away. Owing to certain unseemly interruptions their worship has received from

strangers, we were refused admittance to their chapel. They are called shakers, from their peculiar form of adoration by means of a dance. They are governed by a woman never viewed by profane eyes. I cannot, I confess, incline much towards them.

SATURDAY, JUNE 4TH, 1842.

Returned to Hudson the way we had come; thence by North River to West Point, some four hours short of New York.

SUNDAY, JUNE 5TH, 1842.

West Point is a beautiful place, the fairest among the fair and lovely Highlands of the North River. The Military School of America. Capital hotel, with two drawbacks; a total abstinence house, and meals at rather uncomfortable hours: breakfast at seven, dinner at one, and supper at sunset.

MONDAY, JUNE 6TH, 1842.

Colden to dinner. New York.

TUESDAY, JUNE 7TH, 1842.

Return. *George Washington* a sailing ship! Luckily a good north-west wind. The pilot took advantage of this and had anchored the ship full sixteen miles out. A gallant sight she was as we gained on her in the steamboat, her tall masts pointing up in graceful lines against the sky; but bravest and most gallant sight of all when the tow rope being cast adrift, the canvas fluttered from her masts, and spreading her white wings she soared away upon her free and solitary course. Only fifteen passengers in the after-cabin.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8TH, 1842.

Breakfast at eight, lunch at twelve, dine at three, tea at half-past seven. That is our daily round.

THURSDAY, JUNE 9TH, 1842.

These two days have been squally; but we are a cheerful snug party and the time passes quickly.

SATURDAY, JUNE 11TH, 1842.

We have no lack of music; violin; accordion; and a key-bugle, the player of which usually begins at six o'clock a.m. The combined effect of these instruments when, as often happens, they are played at the same time in different parts of the ship, is sublimely hideous.

MONDAY, JUNE 13TH, 1842.

Much talk about icebergs—but none sighted.

TUESDAY, JUNE 14TH, 1842.

To beguile the tediousness of the dinner—which often takes two and a half hours to serve the many courses, have formed at the lower end (our end) of the table, below the mast, a select association of four called the United Vagabonds—a very hilarious and jovial institution in high favour with the rest of the community.

FRIDAY, JUNE 17TH, 1842.

Dead calm for several days now. The crew amuses itself with fishing ; one hooked an unlucky dolphin, who expired in all his rainbow colours, on the deck. A notable event in our calendar.

SUNDAY, JUNE 19TH, 1842.

We carry in the steerage nearly a hundred passengers ; a little world of poverty. The information we get from the carpenter, about them, why they came out and why they are returning, is often of the strangest kind. The whole system of shipping and conveying these unfortunate persons is one that stands in need of thorough revision.

MONDAY, JUNE 20TH, 1842.

The promised wind has come up in right good earnest, and away we went before it with every inch of canvas set, slashing through the water nobly.

MONDAY, JUNE 27TH, 1842.

Sighted old Cape Clear—God bless it, this morning at sunrise. In the mist of early morning it showed like a cloud ; the brightest and most welcome cloud that ever hid the face of Heaven's fallen sister—Home. All very merry ; drank the Captain's health at Dinner.

TUESDAY, JUNE 28TH, 1842.

The friendly breeze has freshened and we go before it gallantly. Holyhead sighted late in the evening ; the revolving light a most welcome sight. Pilot aboard. Turned in very late.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29TH, 1842.

Turned out pretty early ; by six o'clock clustered on the deck ready to go ashore, looking upon the spires and roofs and smoke of Liverpool. By eight were all sitting down at the hotel having breakfast ; by nine we had all shaken hands, and broken up our social company for ever.

As we rattled by the railroad for Home, how luxuriant the country, how small the fields. The exquisite delights of that one journey, winding up with Home and all that makes it dear !

Here ends Dickens's reconstructed Diary for 1842 dealing with his first visit to America. Mr. T. W. Hill has kindly made the sketch-map, reproduced on page 179. This shows all the places to be found on a modern map that are mentioned in *American Notes*. No places not mentioned are included.

CHELTENHAM ATTRACTS THE FORCES

MR. W. PALMER has been elected President of the Cheltenham Branch for the fifth time, and with the energetic Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer (Miss Dallimore and Mr. A. G. Dye) have evolved a plan to attract to the meetings men and women of the forces. This has already met with a very fair measure of success, and it has been most heartening to find a good general knowledge of Dickens's novels among them. We look forward to a further report with more than usual interest.

FLIGHT-LIEUT. PERCY T. CARDEN, M.C.

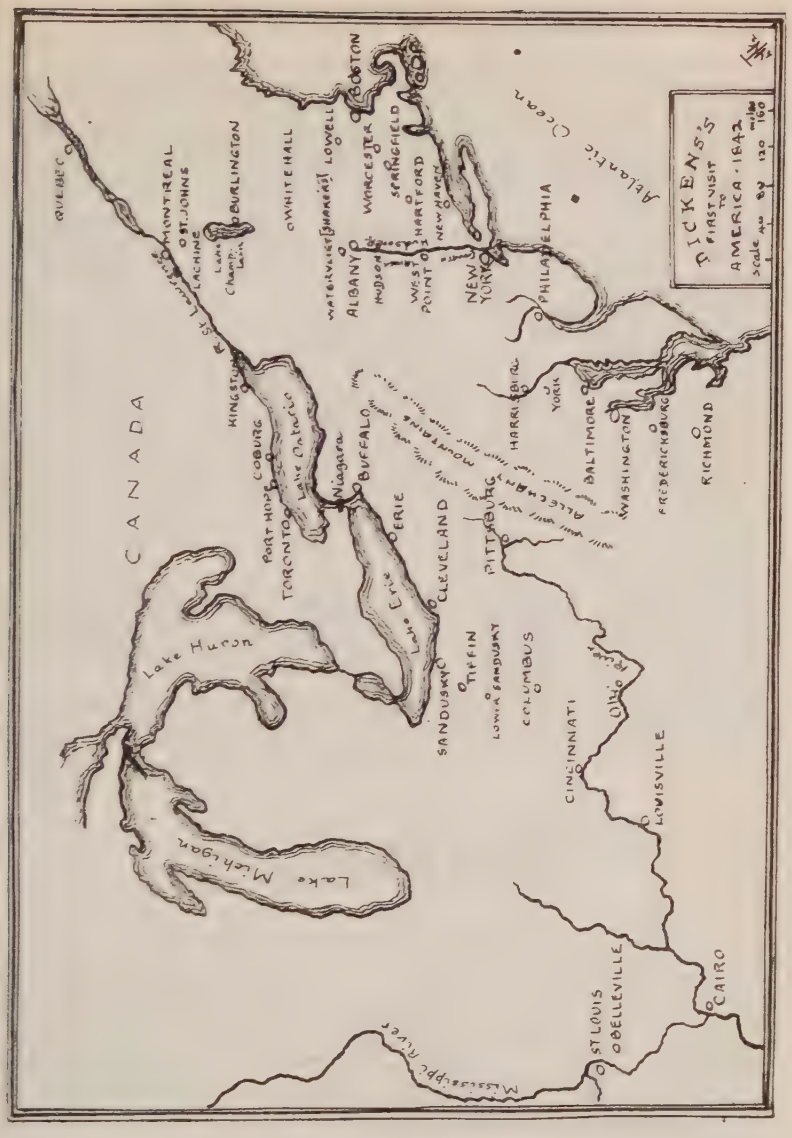
The untimely death on active service on February 12th of Percy Carden has removed one to whom the Dickens Fellowship owes a deep debt of gratitude for work willingly and unselfishly done on its behalf. His capacity for hard work was accompanied by a modesty amounting almost to self-effacement, and few but his intimates had any idea that behind his great unwillingness to talk about himself lay a succession of real achievements.

Born in 1884, the son of Major-General George Carden, a veteran of the Crimean War, Percy Carden was educated at Wellington College and Oxford, where he graduated M.A. and B.C.L. (Second Class Honours). He was called to the Bar and practised until the last War broke out, when he immediately enlisted and went to France with the Royal Fusiliers and later had a commission in the Royal Flying Corps. He was awarded the M.C. in December, 1917. The next year he graduated as pilot and was given command of a Flight, with the rank of Captain. On demobilization Carden resumed practice at the Chancery Bar and shortly afterwards became Assistant Barrister at the Land Registry till he joined the Charity Commission in which he attained the position of Assistant Commissioner. Having joined the R.A.F. Volunteer Reserve early in 1939, he was, on the outbreak of the present war, called up for service, and during the last months of his life was Flight-Lieutenant in a Special Branch of Aerial Defence under the Air Ministry and in charge of an extensive area in the North of England. Here his untiring devotion to duty resulted in a complete breakdown in health that led to his unexpected death. As one of his former chiefs has said: "his death was really due to the too great strain he put on himself in the interest of others. That was typical of him."

To his widow—his constant companion at all Dickens meetings, we tender heartfelt sympathy.

Dickensians the world over will probably know Carden best for his very original contribution to the possible solution of the *Mystery of Edwin Drood* published in 1920, the result of a great deal of research on the spot at Rochester and an intimate knowledge of the printed text, together with a careful sifting of all the evidence conducted with the trained brain of an acute lawyer. His remarkable knowledge of all the proposed solutions to the Drood Mystery was always at the disposal of his friends; the Editor of *The Dickensian* will miss his advice, which, with utmost generosity he would always give "with both hands" on all occasions. The problem always interested him, and it was indeed through his attendance as a spectator at the Trial of John Jasper at the King's Hall, Covent Garden, before "Mr. Justice" G. K. Chesterton in 1914, that caused him to join the Fellowship. Carden was, in 1919, co-opted a member of the Dickens Fellowship Council where his legal knowledge was of great benefit in the reconstruction then under consideration; the present Code of Rules that came into force in 1920 owes a great deal to his skilful drafting. He took a great personal interest in the acquisition of 48 Doughty Street, and the legal security of the Dickens House owes everything to him.

Nothing ever seemed to ruffle his cheery disposition and his merry little laugh was always ready for his friends: he seemed to have the gift of perennial youth and right to the end was as eager to encounter a new experience as the most ardent boy. His conversation was always bright, and he concealed a vast amount of learning behind an easy charm of manner that was most captivating. Everyone who was brought into contact with him will remember him with a particular affection and will feel as a personal loss the passing of Percy Carden.



OUT OF PRINT

Copies of the Spring 1941 *Dickensian* are urgently required for binding sets. Will any reader not desiring to keep his copy, kindly re-sell it to us? Will branch secretaries kindly report at once any unsold copies of the 1942 Spring number. Write to Miss Minards, 23 St. Andrew's Road, Bedford.

UNKNOWN BETTER HALVES

Many readers, delighting in the company of Dickens's widows and widowers, have, in fanciful moments, pictured to themselves the individuals who constituted their "Better-halves."

At a recent London meeting members had the opportunity of hearing some of these conjectural people give an account of themselves, although, truth to tell, they all looked remarkably like well-known Fellowship folk.

Mrs. Sapsea read extracts from her diary, written during the period in which she was courted by and married to the great auctioneer, and we had the felicity of following that lady's sad pilgrimage from adulation to disillusionment.

Mrs. Pecksniff related how she was glad enough to leave the eminent architect to return home to keep house for her Papa—to the financial benefit of her husband—and meantime was able to keep a wary eye upon all the happenings recorded in the history of *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

Mr. Gummidge was unhappily detained, but we subsequently learned that we should have seen a stolid, unimaginative but grumpy husband who exasperated his wife because she could find nothing substantial to quarrel with him about. But he knew full well that if he went, he would leave a gap not less wide than that which would have ensued upon the loss of the most friendly and amiable of husbands. As we know, time verified this view.

Mr. Gamp was the fourth and last visitor expected, but to everyone's delight and astonishment the mystified Chairman's intervention revealed the man before us to be Mr. Harris, who declared that there was never sich a person as a Mr. Gamp, that lady having assumed marriage for the purpose of her profession.

These remarkable resuscitations were welded into a capital entertainment by the chairmanship of Mrs. J. E. L. Bacon, and the audience agreed that here was a good idea capable of a deal of elaboration.

L. C. S.

A GREAT LOSS TO VANCOUVER

The Vancouver Branch has suffered a heavy loss by the death on February 6th last of our President, Dr. George W. Knipe. He had occupied the office for two years and was so grounded in the spirit of brotherhood that his kindly personality seemed to knit us more closely together in the true bond of Fellowship. He was a big man, not only in stature, but also in mind and heart, and his friendly handshake, his sympathetic approach and his ready wit will long be remembered and cherished.

Owing to this sad event, the Birthday Celebration Dinner which was to have been held at the Hotel Georgia, was cancelled.

A. M. C.

An account of Montreal's celebration of the centenary of Dickens's visit, arrived too late for inclusion in this number; it will appear in the next.

Owing to limitation of paper, copies of *The Dickensian* cannot be guaranteed unless ordered in advance. See page 131.

THE MOST HUMAN HEROINE

By V. M. NEWMAN

Bella Wilfer is the most human of Dickens's heroines. She is far from being perfect, so she does not exasperate the reader as Little Dorrit and Agnes Wickfield often do. On the other hand she is not an inhuman coquette like Estella ! Her faults and virtues are those natural in her circumstances and with her background. She is essentially kind-hearted and affectionate, yet previous to the opening of the story there has been only one person, her father, to draw out her better side. She is gay and light-hearted by nature, but her life must have been very dreary with Mrs. Wilfer and Lavinia as perpetual companions, and it cannot have been much enlivened by George Sampson as an admirer. In such circumstances Bella became petulant ; what nineteen-year-old girl would not ? Petulance is a form of discontent, and Bella thought to attain satisfaction through the luxury and pleasure the Boffins could give her. But her dissatisfaction was not merely with her surroundings ; it persisted even when she achieved all the good things for which she had longed. It was only when her love for John Harmon made her cease to care at all about material circumstances that her higher nature was satisfied.

There is one fault of which Bella is *not* guilty. She is never snobbish. Her adoption by the wealthy Boffins does not make her forget her own family ; and she is never ashamed of the Boffins themselves although she knows she is their superior by birth and education.

The one person, apart from her father, to whom Bella gives something of her confidence is Lizzie Hexam, a poor working girl almost uneducated but in whom Bella's quick wit discovers a golden nature. Another of Bella's good points is that she is never ungrateful. Even when she is bitterly disappointed in Mr. Boffin and believes that he has become miserly and hard-hearted, she always remembers with gratitude and affection his unchanging kindness to herself.

Bella's is a complex character, a mixture of wilfulness, vanity, and genuine good-heartedness. It is natural, therefore, that the people to whom she is most drawn should be simple characters. Reginald Wilfer, Mr. and Mrs. Boffin, Lizzie Hexam, Betty Higden, and little Johnny are straightforward and lovable people, with no awkward angles in their characters. John Harmon, who in a different way is as complex as Bella, begins by arousing her antagonism. The mystery about him (which might attract another type of girl) excites her interest, but chiefly by way of making her oppose him whenever possible. It is only when she believes him to be oppressed and ill-treated that her kinder feelings are drawn out and eventually turn to love.

It is noticeable that Bella and Mrs. Lammle have the worst possible effect upon each other. They both need to have their sympathy awakened in order to reveal their better natures. The pitiful story of old Betty Higden softened Bella at a time when she was behaving her worst ; but to each other Sophronia Lammle and Bella Wilfer showed only the hard calculating sides of their natures. And so we find Bella committing her one almost unforgivable crime, when, against all her better instincts, she betrays John Harmon's confidence to Mrs. Lammle, sneering at the man who loves her and whom she is on the verge of loving in return.

The fault in Bella on which Dickens lays most stress is her mercenariness. But she did not love money for its own sake, only for what it could give her, a not unnatural feeling when one remembers how poor and cramped her life had been. However, her desire for money was not wholly selfish ; she genuinely longed to give to her father all the

things he needed so badly, even such an ordinary thing as a complete new suit, at one time this having been beyond his reach. To take "Pa" into her wealthy life, to give to him pleasure and happiness such as he had never known, would at any period of Bella's history have given her more delight than any purely selfish pleasure. The account of the relations between R.W. and his daughter includes some of the most charming scenes that Dickens ever wrote.

Dickens was a great master of contrast, and these scenes are made the more effective by the gloomy figure of Mrs. Wilfer in the background. John Harmon said the true thing when he declared that though Bella might be her father's daughter she could not be her mother's. Bella's quick wits, however, came from neither her father nor her mother, but were purely her own. She is the sharpest witted of all Dickens's heroines. Her wit only betrays her once, when she believes Mr. Boffin to be becoming miserly and hard-hearted; and as that was deliberate on his part, she can hardly be blamed.

One good gift which Bella inherited from her father was serenity of nerves. If she had not possessed that she might have done something desperate in order to escape from her mother and sister, even if it were only by marrying George Sampson. Bella certainly possessed the power of winning affection; the love lavished upon her by Mr. and Mrs. Boffin and John Harmon does at times seem to be undeserved, though when she has been especially exasperating her gentler side still shows itself.

Dickens's love of contrast also appears in his choice of Bella Wilfer and Lizzie Hexam as the heroines of *Our Mutual Friend*, for they are excellent foils to each other. Lizzie, of humble birth and no education, beautiful, but her beauty only a danger to her, loving and loyal even to her brute of a father and thoroughly selfish brother, steadfast to what she believes to be right, is such a character as Dickens loved to draw. She belongs to the passive type; events happen to her, she does not cause them to happen, and the most active thing she does is to run away in order to prevent them happening. Bella's character is very different and more complex. Her gaiety and light-heartedness throw into prominence Lizzie's gravity and quietness; her discontent enhances Lizzie's submissive humility. Again Lizzie's unselfishness shames Bella's petulance and makes her realize her own inferiority of character. "Limited little brute" is how she describes herself in her first conversation with Lizzie, and Bella really means it although it is said playfully. We may safely conclude that Mrs. John Harmon and Mrs. Eugene Wrayburn remained not only friends, but very useful friends to each other, Lizzie helping to steady Bella and Bella helping to cheer and enliven Lizzie.

Bella Wilfer is what most of Dickens's heroines are not, a real person; both in her good points and bad ones, her weakness and her strength, she is essentially human and therefore lovable.

OUR VILLAGE BRANCH

THE branch of the Dickens Fellowship in the little village of Littlebourne, near Canterbury, under the leadership of their indefatigable President, Mrs. Duthoit, has been busy all the winter knitting comforts for an adopted minesweeper, augmenting and replacing socks, gloves, scarves and helmets as the need required. At Christmas and Easter seasonable cakes were provided for the crew, and much appreciated, as their galleys were often flooded out. Taking a leaf out of the Editor's suggestion, the Branch is a strict adherent to "Dickens All The Year Round," and this has included a variety of readings covering a wide scope of our author's works.

BOZ RETURNS TO BOZ-TOWN

THE Birthday Celebration of the Boston Branch on February 7th last most appropriately took the form of an authentic reproduction, so far as the top-table was concerned, of the famous dinner given to Dickens on February 1st, 1842, by the "Young Men of Boston." All the speeches made a century ago were again delivered, and the same music was played. Most appropriate of all was that just at this time the famous toast, "America and England; and may they never have any division but the Atlantic between them," should again have been given, to such rousing applause.

Mr. Edward F. Payne, the author of that invaluable piece of reconstruction "Dickens Days in Boston," was in the Chair, representing the original chairman, the Hon. Josiah Quincy Junr., President of the Senate; Mr. William Beers proved himself an admirable Dickens; and our own representative from London, Mr. William Miller, enacted T. Colley Grattan, the British Consul. Other speakers were:

Richard Henry Dana, Jr. (author of "Two Years Before the Mast")—Mr. Henry W. L. Dana (Grandson of the original speaker).

Hon. Josiah Quincy, Sr., President of Harvard University—Mr. Livingston Stebbins.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes—Mr. Chester J. Ginder.

Washington Allston, Poet and Painter—Mr. Frank W. C. Hersey.

J. Thomas Stevenson, Representative Merchant—Mr. David E. Sprague.

Hon. Jonathan Chapman, Mayor of Boston—Mr. Harrison W. Crofford.

J. M. Field, Comedian at Old Tremont Theatre—Mr. Leon E. Dadmun.

LONDON SUMMER MEETINGS

THE following meetings have been arranged for members during the summer at The Friends Meeting House, Euston Road, at 2.30 p.m.:

Saturday, June 6th.—Mrs. Jane Bacon on "Characters in Embryo."

Saturday, July 18th.—Annual Conference (see page 131).

The following Rambles have also been arranged:

Saturday, August 8th.—"The Thames from Hammersmith to Chiswick." Conducted by Lt.-Col. W. M. H. Spiller. Meet at Hammersmith Tube Station 2.30 p.m.

Saturday, September 5th.—"Old Richmond." Conducted by Mr. J. D. Billington. Meet at Richmond Theatre, Richmond Green, 3 p.m.

Members are requested to note these dates, as this is the sole notification they will receive.

MORE DICKENS STREETS

THE fame of the village of Pickwick, near Bath, has been further enhanced by the recent naming of new streets after Dickens characters. There is Dickens-avenue, Weller-road, Tupman-avenue, Wardle-road, and Oliver-avenue. Why Oliver? Has the fount of *Pickwick* names run dry?

THE BOOK FOR THE SEASON 1942-3 is *Dombey and Son.*

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A CORRECTION

SIR.—Mea culpa. When I first started reading for the press I was told, "verify your references."

On page 105 of the last number I made a terrible "howler" that I ought to have discovered in reading the proof-sheet—just the opportunity for verifying the reference.

Will you kindly insert this correction in lines 11 and 12: Instead of "perhaps her nephew, Harry, who was courting her daughter, had a pretty good notion," read: "perhaps her *son*, Harry, who was courting her *adopted* daughter, had a pretty good notion."

T. KENT BRUMLEIGH.

RECENT DICKENSIANA

BOOKS.

"A Handy Dickens," by Arthur Machen. Constable, 8s. 6d.

NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES.

"He Gave us the Spirit of Christmas," by J. H. B. Peel. "Everybody's Weekly," January 3rd.

"Dickens and Coventry." "Coventry Standard," January 17th.

"The Merry Dickens." "Romford Recorder," December 26th.

"Pickwick's Christmas—1941." "Yorkshire Evening Post," December 24th.

"Dickens's Circus" (Astleys) (illustrated). "Times Literary Supplement," January 10th.

"1842—Charles Dickens; 1942—Winston Churchill," by G. I. Petty. "Yorkshire Evening Post,' January 2nd.

"A New Christmas Carol," by Gilbert Frankau. "Strand Magazine," December.

"A Bridge with Dickens," by J. R. F. Taylor. "P.L.A. Monthly," November.

"Dickens's Christmas Carol," by Rev. R. Moloney, S.J. "Universe," December 5th.

"Dickens, Diplomat of Letters," by Pearl Strachan. "Christian Science Monitor," October 16th.

"Dickens in Boz-town," by Pearl Strachan (Illustrated). "Christian Science Monitor, January 17th.

"Dickens Shocked Boston Hundred years ago," by E. F. Payne. "Boston Sunday Globe," January 18th.

"Doctors in Dickens," by W. C. B. "Birmingham Post," Feb. 7th.

"Dickens as Clinical Observer." "British Medical Journal," Apl. 11th.

"Charles Dickens; neuro-psychiatrist," by W. Russell Brain. "London Hospital Gazette," January.

"Dickens in the Clinic." "The Times" (Leader), April 30th.

"Mr. Winkle, a golf commentary," by Bernard Darwin. "Country Life," May 8th.

DICKENS READINGS AT KNEBWORTH

THE famous Hall at Knebworth House again resounded with Dickens when, in April last, Lord Lytton gave a reading from Dickens in aid of the local church. This was indeed a great tribute from the grandson of the famous author of "The Last of the Barons."